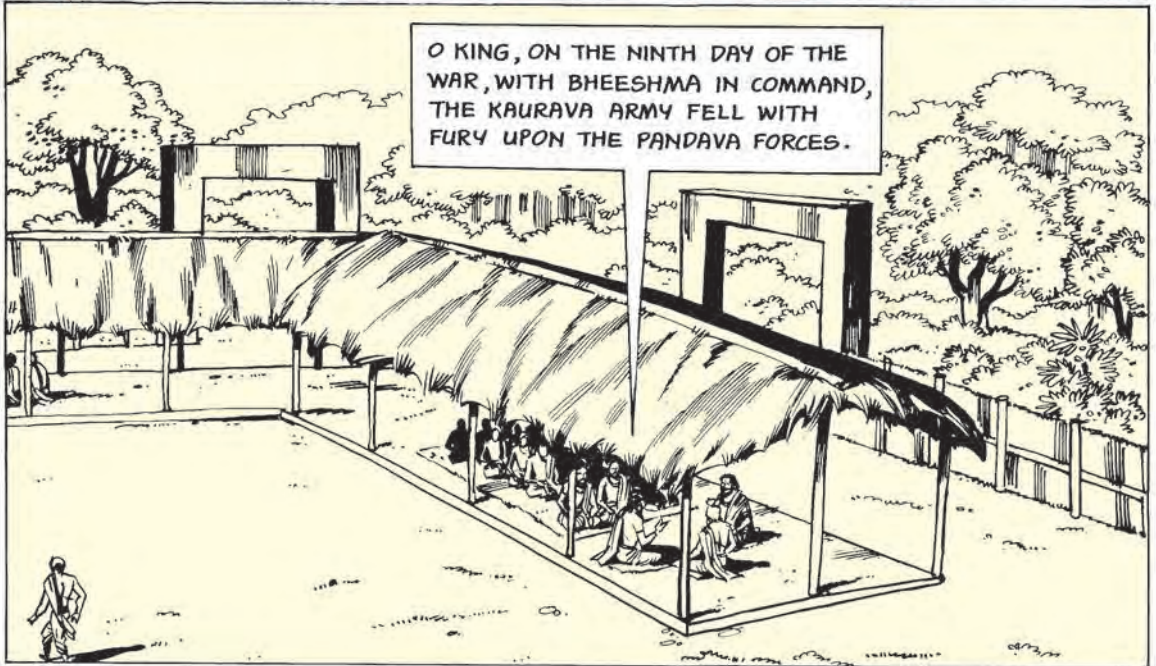


# Mahabharata - 32

## THE FALL OF BHEESHMA

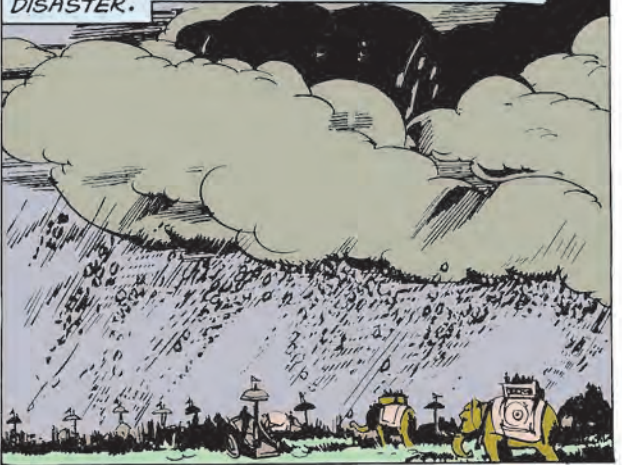




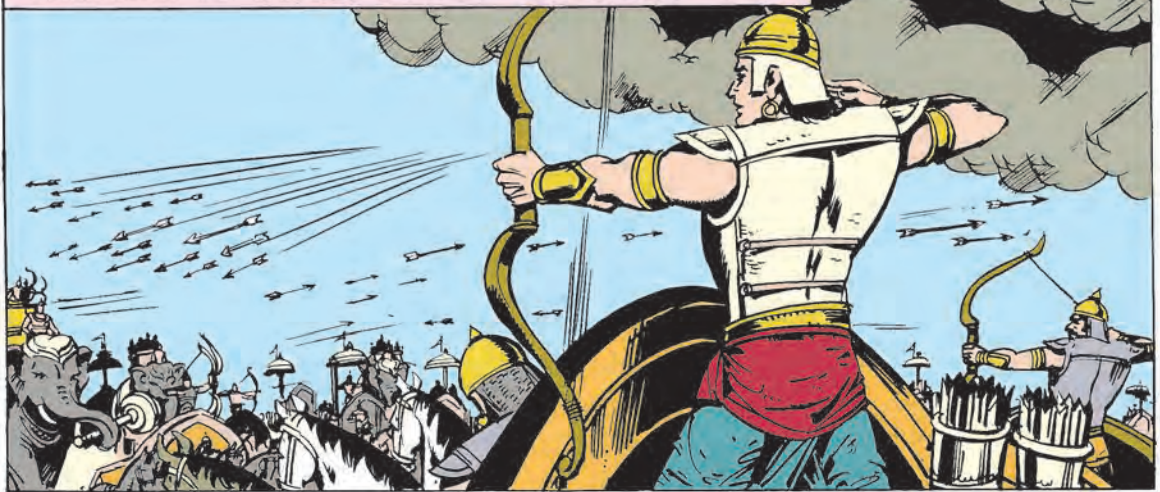
"...EVIL OMENS APPEARED.



"THE SUN SEEMED BLOTTED AND A RAIN OF METEORS FELL FROM THE SKY FOREBODING DISASTER.



"ABHIMANYU LED A FIERCE ATTACK ON THE KAURAVA ARMY.

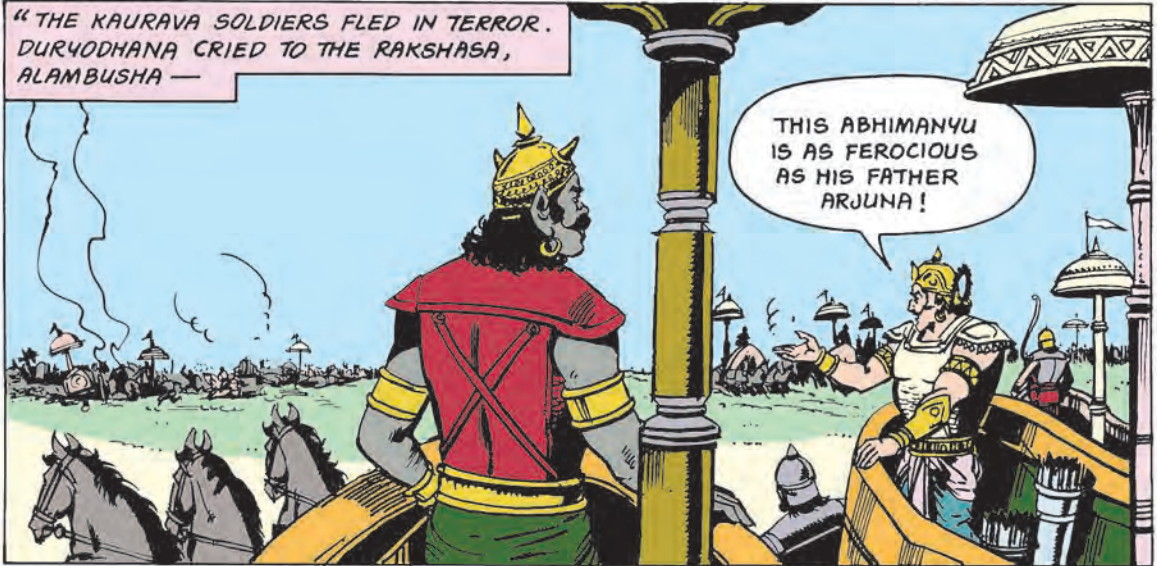


"CHARIOTS, CAVALRYMEN AND ELEPHANTS FELL TO HIS SURE ARROWS.





"THE KAURAVA SOLDIERS FLED IN TERROR. DURYODHANA CRIED TO THE RAKSHASA, ALAMBUSHA —



THIS ABHIMANYU IS AS FEROCIOUS AS HIS FATHER ARJUNA!

ALAMBHUSHA, GO AND KILL ABHIMANYU WHILE I LAUNCH AN ATTACK ON ARJUNA WITH DRONA AND OTHERS.

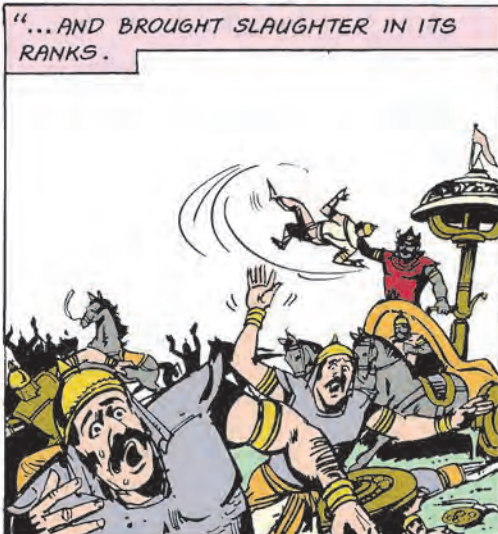
VERY WELL, DURYODHANA.



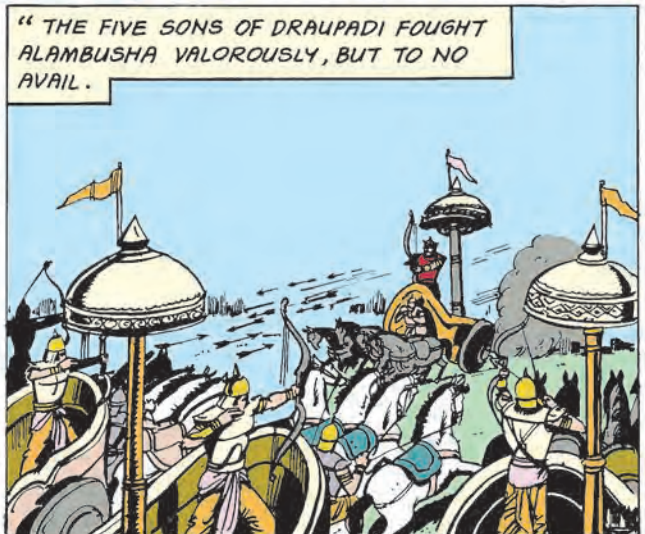
"ALAMBUSHA RUSHED AT THE PANDAVA ARMY...



"...AND BROUGHT SLAUGHTER IN ITS RANKS.



"THE FIVE SONS OF DRAUPADI FOUGHT ALAMBUSHA VALOROUSLY, BUT TO NO AVAIL.





"ABHIMANYU THEN CAME TO THE RESCUE OF HIS BROTHERS."



"HE RELEASED POWERFUL WEAPONS ON ALAMBUSHA."



"WHEREUPON THE RAKSHASA, USING HIS MAGICAL POWERS, ENVELOPED THE PANDAVA ARMY IN DARKNESS."



"ABHIMANYU THEN RELEASED THE BHASKARA WEAPON..."



"... WHICH DISPELLED THE DARKNESS. NOW LIGHT SHONE FORTH."





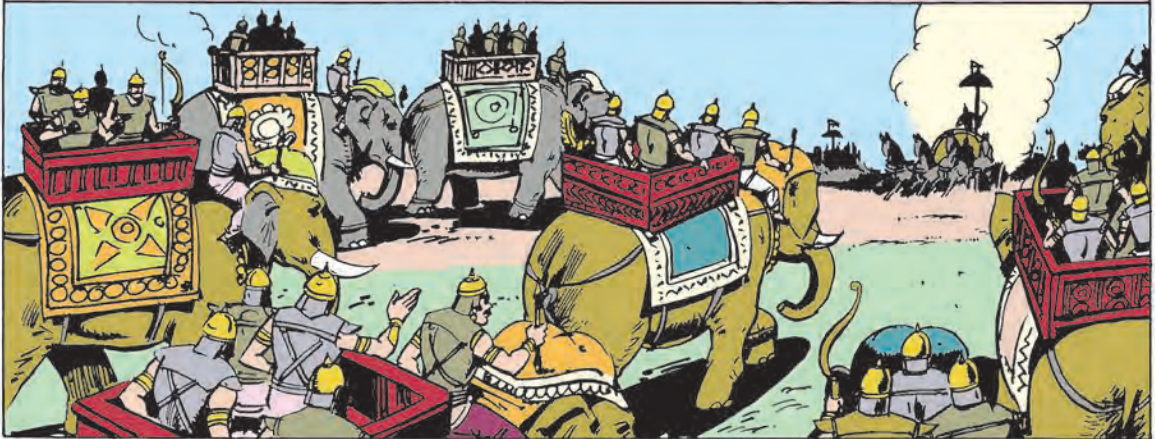
"HAVING DESTROYED THE ILLUSION OF DARKNESS CREATED BY ALAMBUSHA, ABHIMANYU TORMENTED HIM WITH ARROWS."



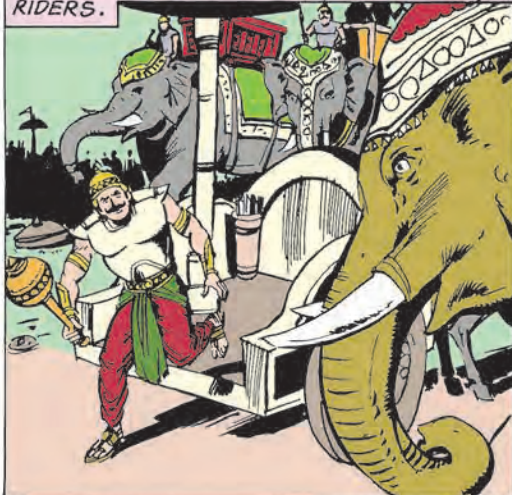
"ALAMBUSHA HAD TO FLEE THE BATTLEFIELD IN MORTAL FEAR OF THE YOUNG ABHIMANYU."



"THE KAURAVAS SET UPON BHEEMA AN ENTIRE BATTALION OF ELEPHANT-WARRIORS."



"DESCENDING FROM HIS CHARIOT BHEEMA ATTACKED THE ELEPHANTS AND THEIR RIDERS."



"HE SLEW MANY OF THEM."





"THE FRIGHTENED ELEPHANTS RETREATED IN FEAR, TRAMPLING MANY OF THE KAURAVA ARMY ITSELF UNDERFOOT."



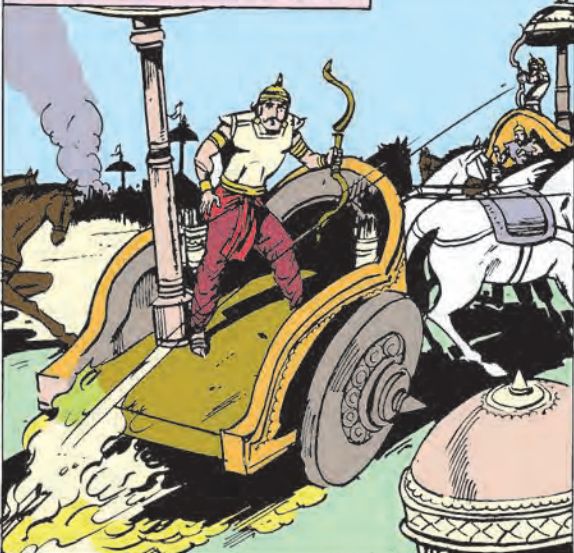
"SATYAKI CHARGED AT BHEESHMA AND WOUNDED HIM."



"BHEESHMA DISCHARGED A SHARP, SNAKE-LIKE ARROW ON SATYAKI..."



"...BUT SATYAKI DODGED IT."



"HIGHLY ENRAGED, BHEESHMA THREW HIMSELF WITH FURY ON THE PANDAVA ARMY."





"THE PANDAVAS CAME TO THE RESCUE OF SATYAKI AND SURROUNDED BHEESHMA.



"SEEING THIS, DURYODHANA SAID TO DUMSHASANA —



BHEESHMA IS IN DANGER, WE MUST SEND REINFORCEMENTS FOR HIS PROTECTION.

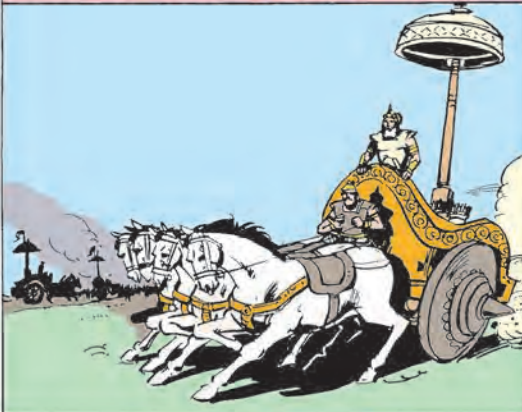
"DURYODHANA THEN SENT SHAKUNI WITH A TEN-THOUSAND STRONG CAVALRY TO CHECK THE ADVANCE OF THE PANDAVAS.



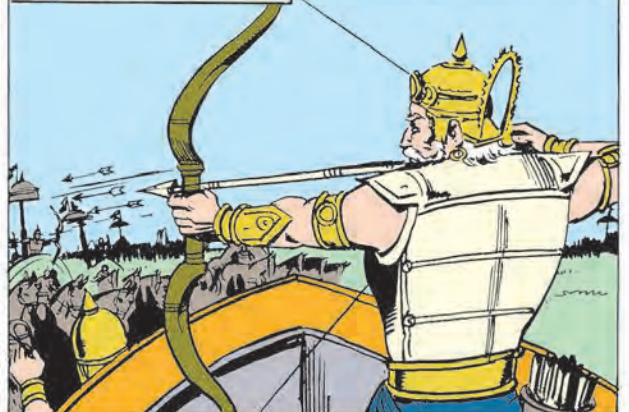
"BUT YUDHISHTHIRA, NAKULA AND SAHADEVA ROUTED IT COMPLETELY.



"RESOLVED TO CONTAIN THE INDOMITABLE PANDAVAS, BHEESHMA CAME TO THE FORE.



"HE LET LOOSE ALL HIS STRENGTH AGAINST THE PANDAVA ARMY.





"BEFORE SUNSET THE BATTLEFIELD WAS A SCENE OF UTTER RUIN AND DESOLATION."



"KRISHNA BROUGHT THE CHARIOT TO A HALT AND SAID TO ARJUNA —

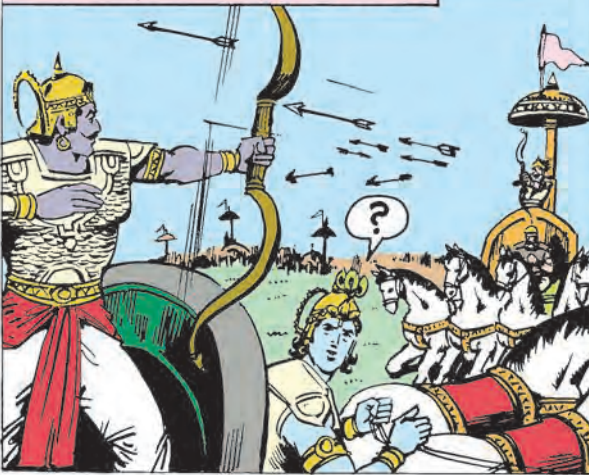


"A RELUCTANT ARJUNA REPLIED —

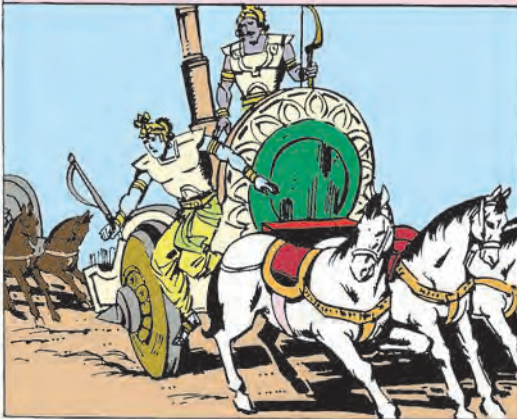




"AS ARJUNA CONFRONTED BHEESHMA, THE LATTER RAINED ARROWS ON HIM."



"KRISHNA JUMPED OFF THE CHARIOT..."



"...AND CHARGED AGAINST BHEESHMA."



"BHEESHMA, HOWEVER, WELCOMED KRISHNA."

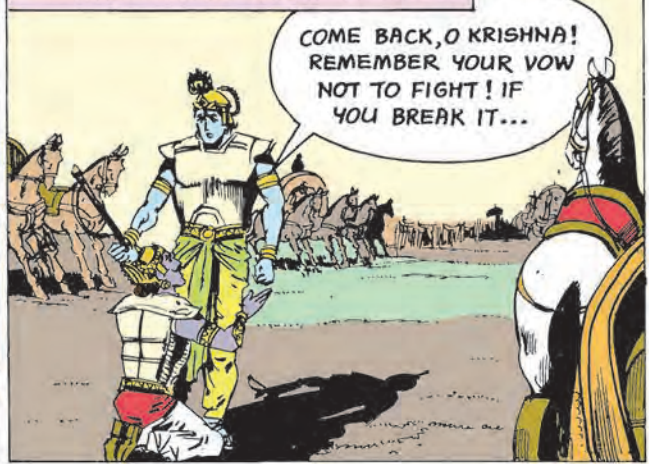




"ARJUNA POUNCED ON KRISHNA AND HELD HIM TIGHTLY.



"ARJUNA FELL AT KRISHNA'S FEET.



... PEOPLE WILL CALL YOU A LIAR!



LEAVE IT TO ME, O KESHAVA! I SWEAR BY MY WEAPONS, BY TRUTH, BY ALL MY GOOD DEEDS THAT I WILL KILL MY GREAT-UNCLE BHEESHMA!



"KRISHNA ASCENDED THE CHARIOT IN ANGRY SILENCE.

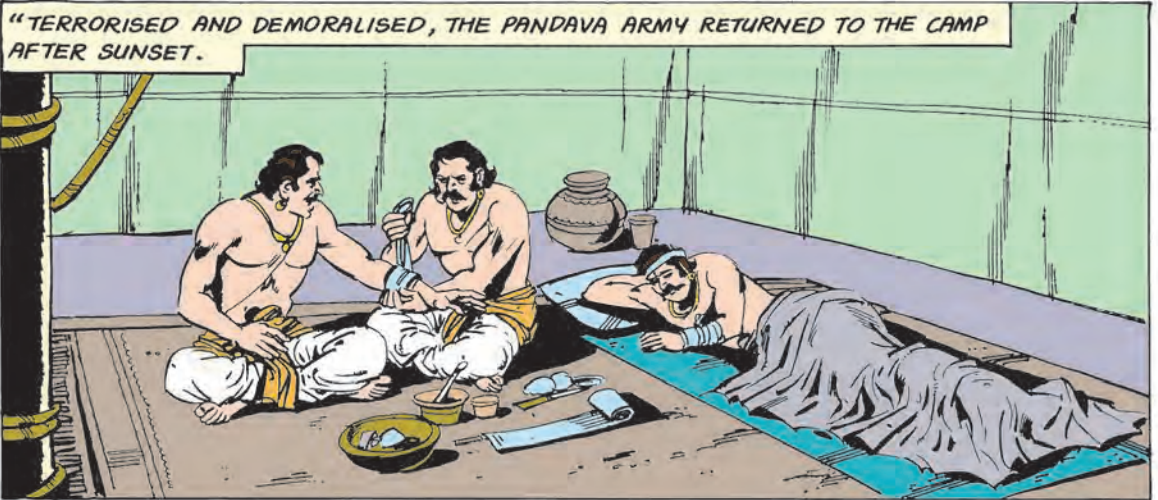


"BHEESHMA RAINED A SHOWER OF ARROWS ON THE PANDAVA ARMY.



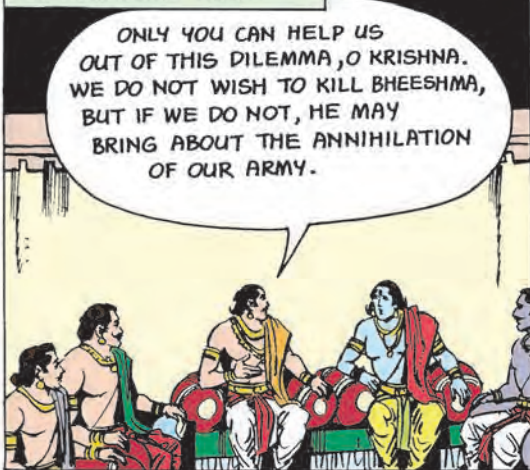


"TERRORISED AND DEMORALISED, THE PANDAVA ARMY RETURNED TO THE CAMP AFTER SUNSET."



"AFTER NIGHTFALL, LEADERS OF THE PANDAVA ARMY ASSEMBLED TOGETHER FOR A CONFERENCE. ADDRESSING KRISHNA YUDHISHTHIRA SAID —

ONLY YOU CAN HELP US OUT OF THIS DILEMMA, O KRISHNA. WE DO NOT WISH TO KILL BHEESHMA, BUT IF WE DO NOT, HE MAY BRING ABOUT THE ANNIHILATION OF OUR ARMY.



"KRISHNA COMSOLED HIM—

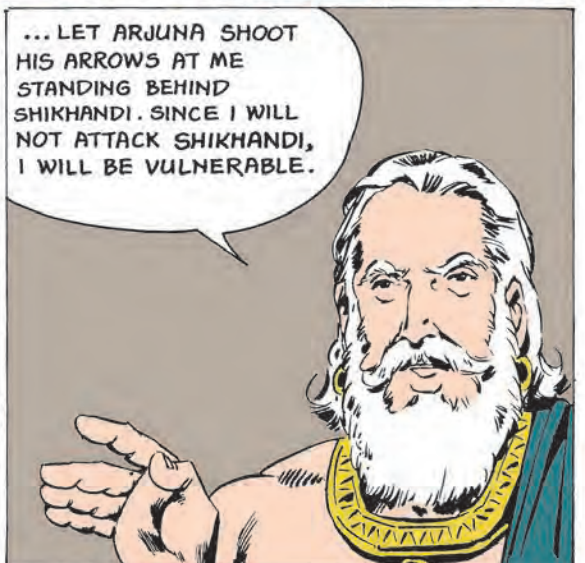
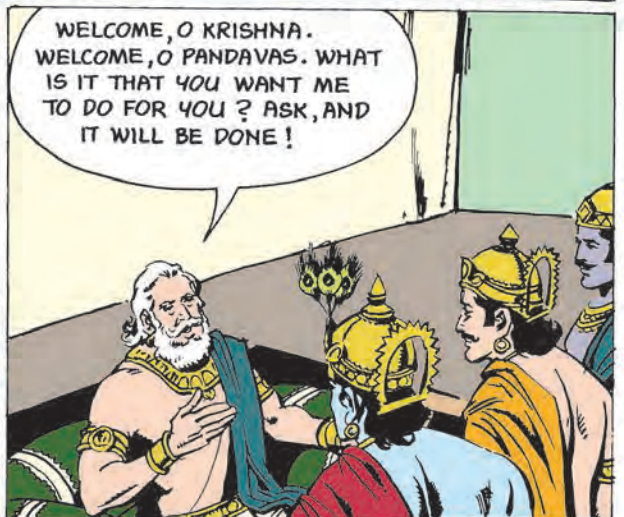
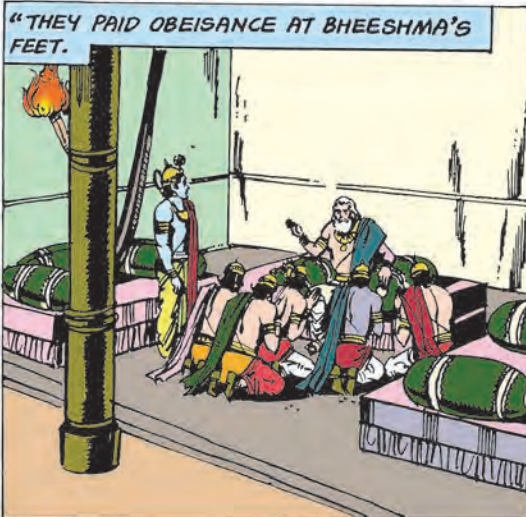
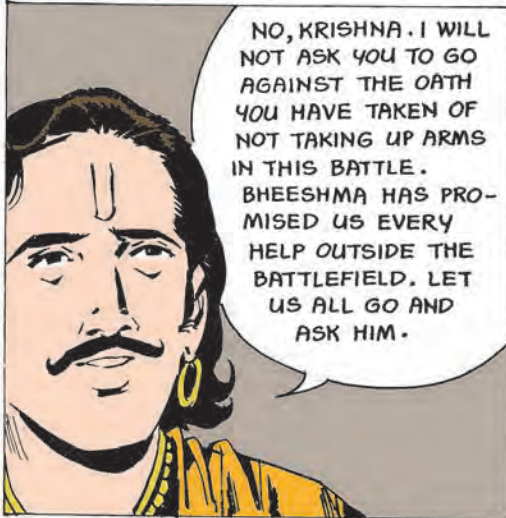
DO NOT GRIEVE, O YUDHISHTHIRA. AT YOUR COMMAND, I AM READY TO KILL BHEESHMA. BUT ARJUNA HAS VOWED TO KILL HIM...



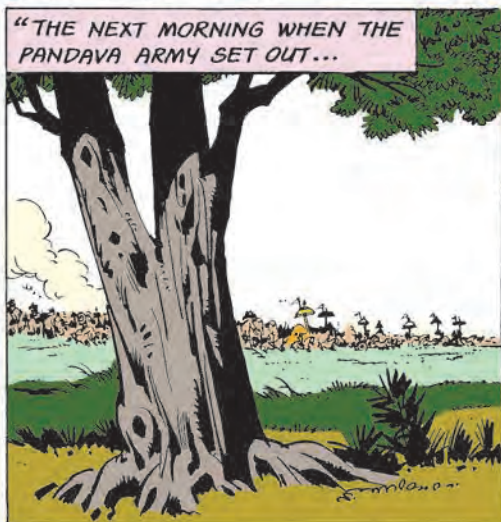
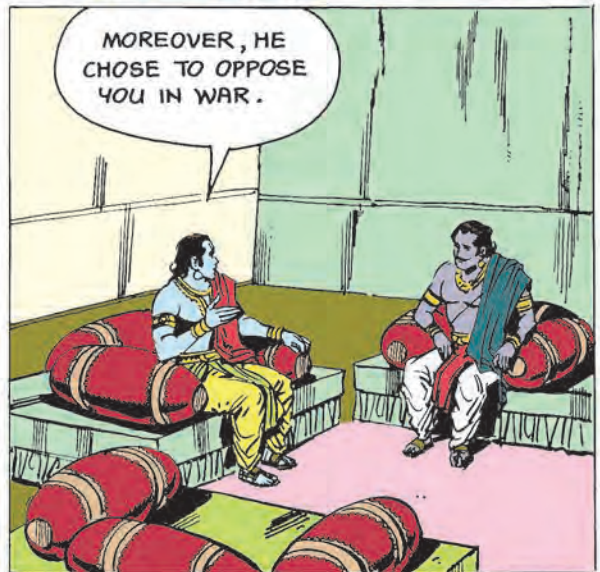
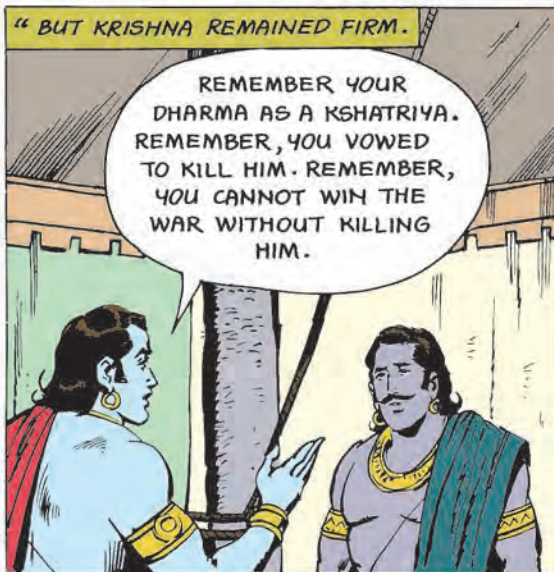
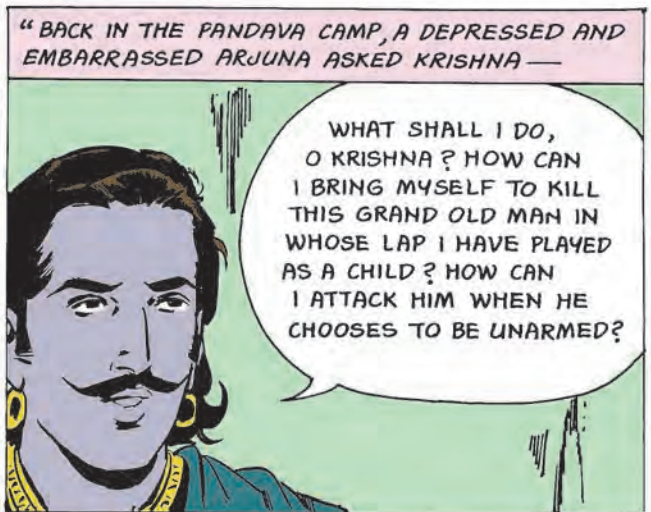
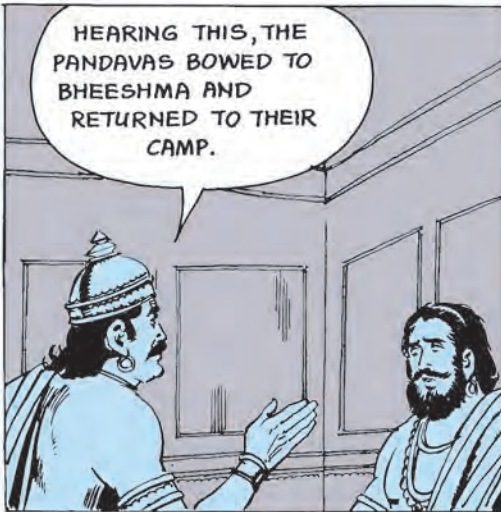
...AND AS YOUR FRIEND, ALLY AND WELL-WISHER, IT IS MY DUTY TO ENSURE THAT THE VOW DOES NOT GO UNFULFILLED.





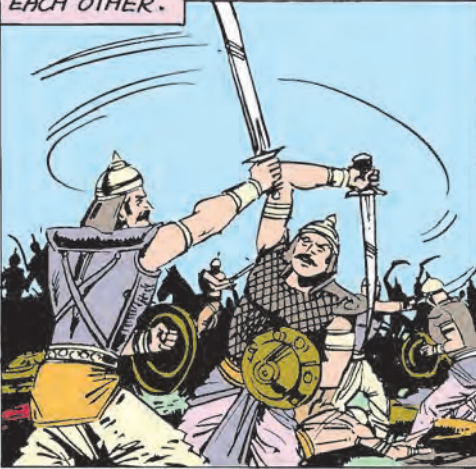








"THE TWO ARMIES CHARGED AGAINST EACH OTHER."



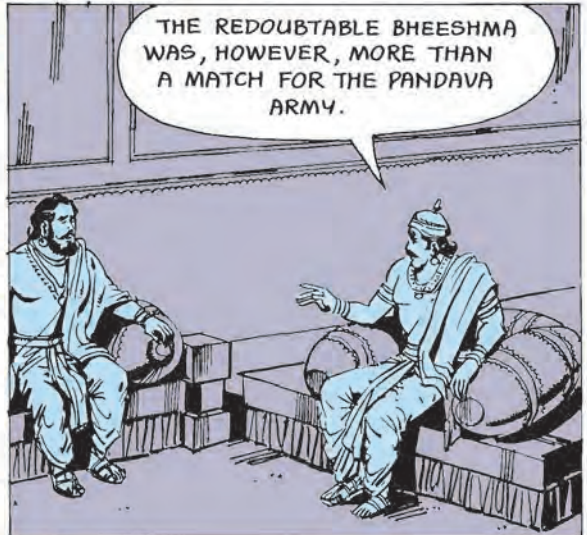
"WHEN BHEESHMA AND SHIKHANDI CAME FACE TO FACE—"



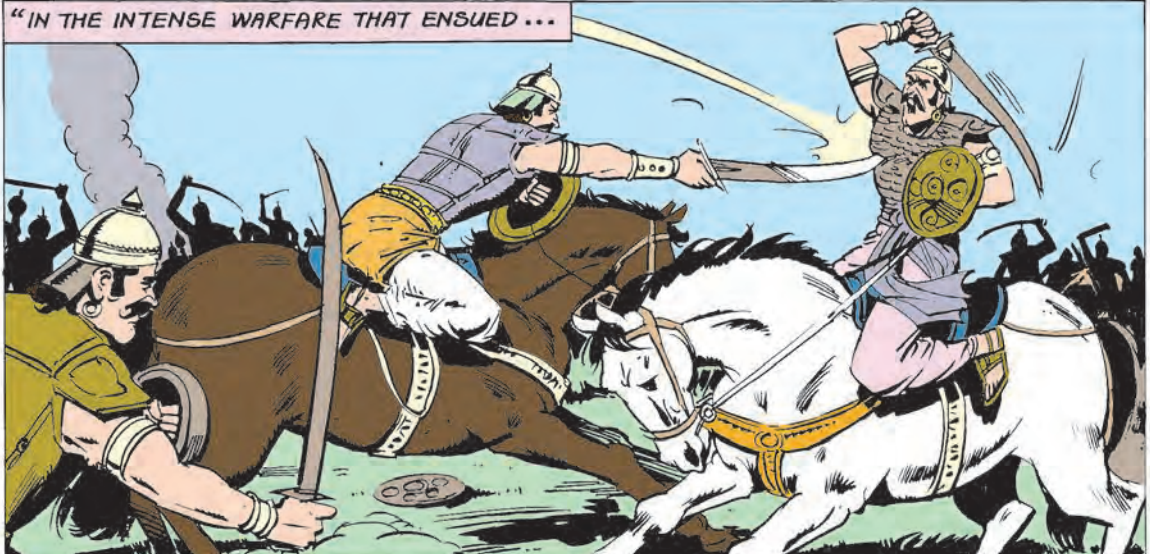
"WHEN ARJUNA SAW THIS CONFRONTATION, HE SAID TO SHIKHANDI —"



THE REDOUBTABLE BHEESHMA WAS, HOWEVER, MORE THAN A MATCH FOR THE PANDAVA ARMY.

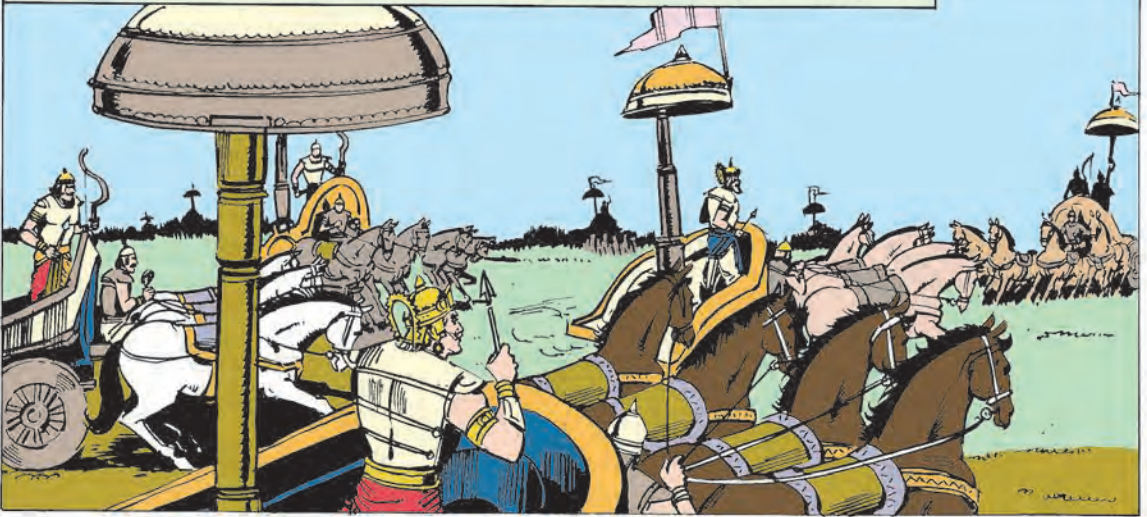


"IN THE INTENSE WARFARE THAT ENSUED ..."





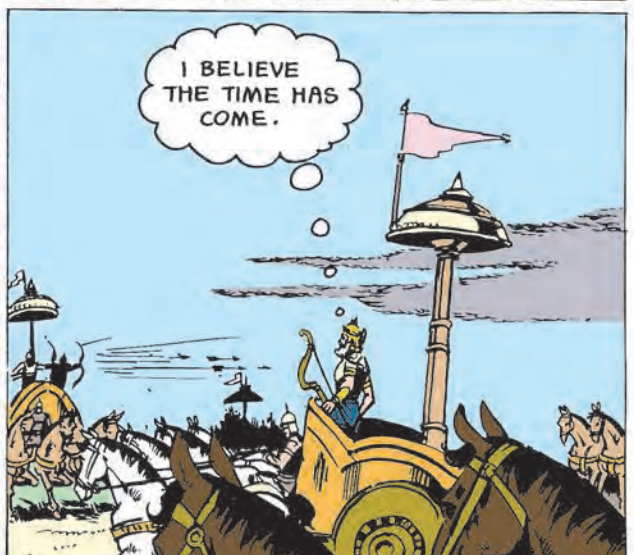
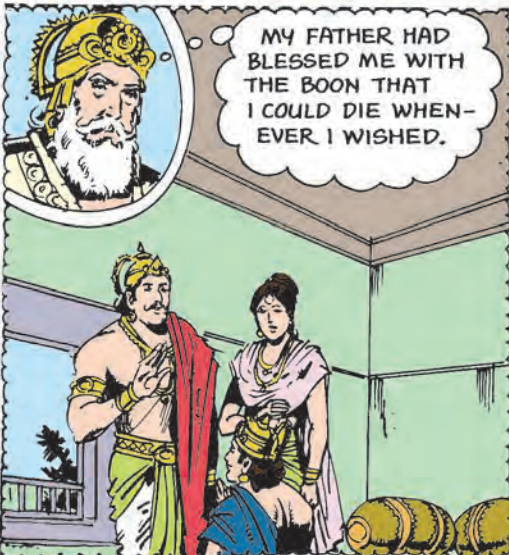
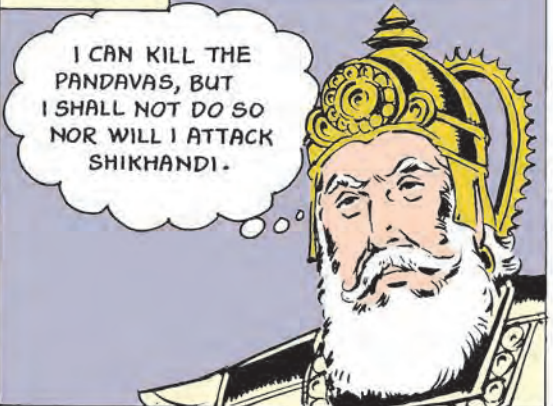
"...THE PANDAVA WARRIORS MENACINGLY CLOSED IN ON BHEESHMA..."



"...AND ARJUNA, USING SHIKHANDI AS A SHIELD, REACHED WITHIN CLOSE RANGE OF BHEESHMA."



"AN ISOLATED BHEESHMA WAS NOW COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY PANDAVA WARRIORS."



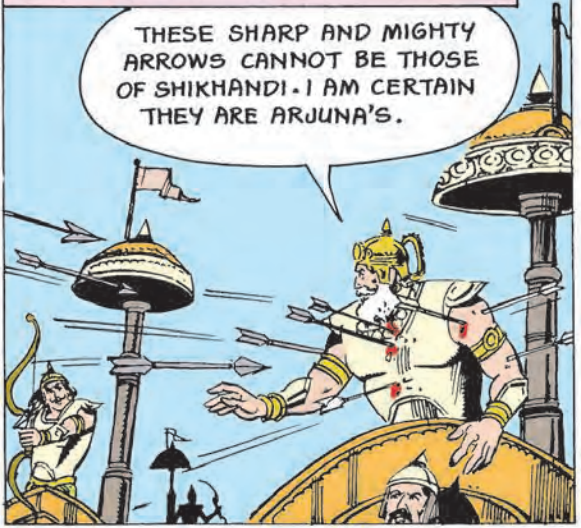


"ARJUNA'S SHARP ARROWS WOUNDED BHEESHMA."

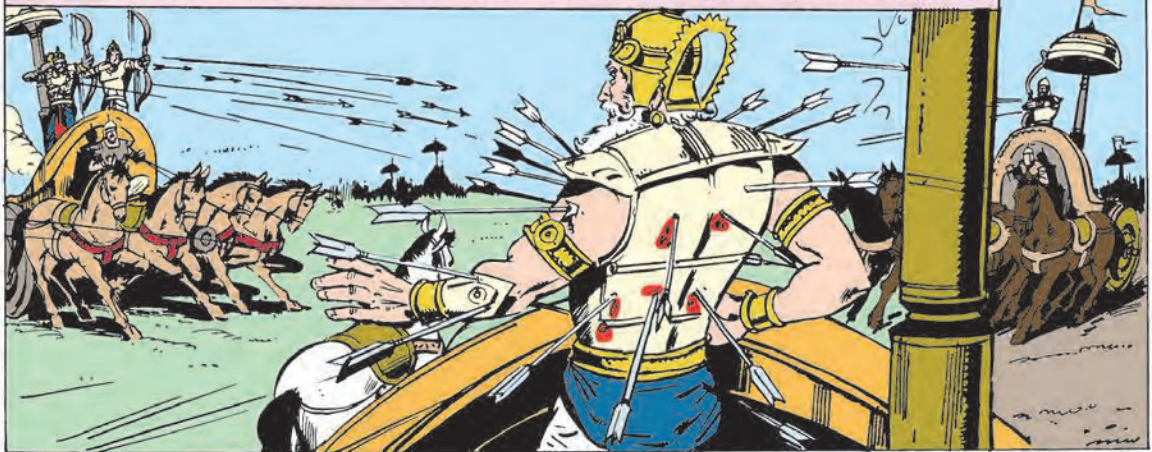


"BHEESHMA SAID TO DUHSHASANA —

THESE SHARP AND MIGHTY ARROWS CANNOT BE THOSE OF SHIKHANDI. I AM CERTAIN THEY ARE ARJUNA'S."



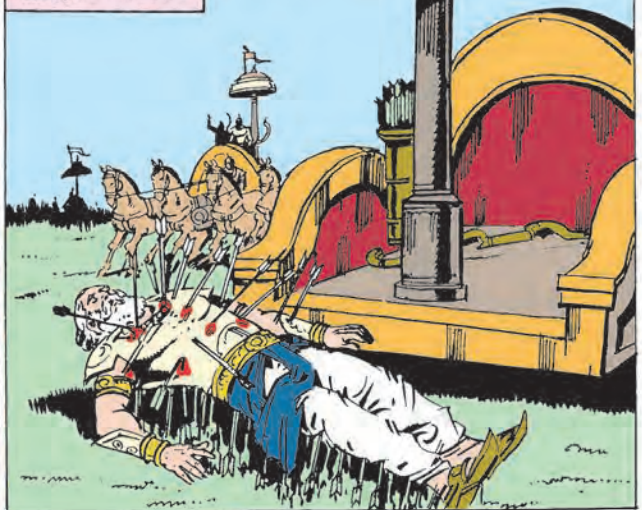
"THE PANDAVAS RAINED AN INCESSANT SHOWER OF ARROWS ON BHEESHMA."



"WITH A FEW HOURS TO GO BEFORE SUNSET, BHEESHMA LOOKED TO THE SKY IN THE EAST ..."



"... AND FELL."





"IN HEAVEN THE GODS LAMENTED LOUDLY THE FALL OF THIS MIGHTY HERO."

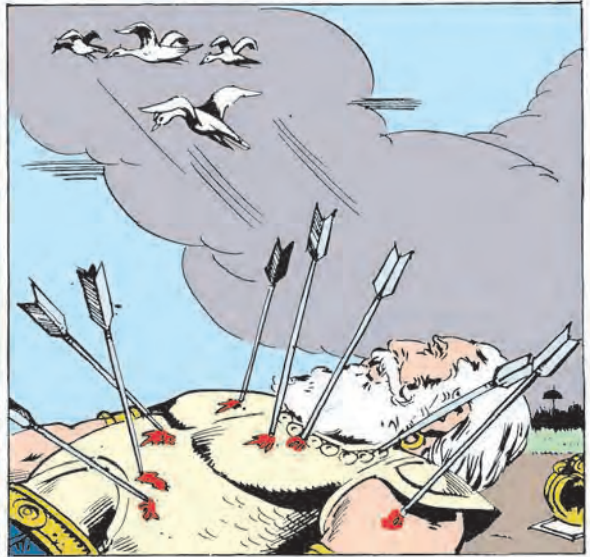


THE SUN IS YET IN HIS SOUTHERN VOYAGE. I DO NOT WISH TO DIE AT THIS INAUSPICIOUS HOUR.



"HOLY SAGES, LIVING ON THE MANSAROVAR\*, TOOK THE FORM OF SWANS AND CAME TO VISIT BHEESHMA. BHEESHMA ASSURED THEM —

I SHALL NOT DIE TILL THE SUN TRAVELS NORTHWARD.



"THE KAURAVA WARRIORS WERE OVERCOME BY GRIEF."



\* A MYTHICAL LAKE SAID TO EXIST ON THE HIMALAYAS.



"A SHADOW OF GLOOM SPREAD OVER THE WHOLE KAURAVA ARMY."



"THE PANDAVAS, HOWEVER, WERE JUBILANT."



"DHRTIRASHTRA WAS BESIDE HIMSELF WITH SORROW."



"SOON, THE KAURAVA AND PANDAVA WARRIORS CAME AND STOOD ALL AROUND BHEESHMA."



"BOTH DRONA AND THE PANDAVAS SENT MESSENGERS ALL AROUND, CALLING FOR A CEASE FIRE."





"BHEESHMA SPOKE UP —

WELCOME, O VALIANT  
WARRIORS ! I AM PLEASED  
TO SEE YOU ALL HERE.



THEN —

MY HEAD HANGS  
LOOSE . ONE OF YOU  
MUST GIVE ME A  
HEAD-REST.



"SEVERAL SOFT AND EXCELLENT  
PILLOWS WERE BROUGHT BUT  
BHEESHMA REFUSED THEM ALL.

THESE ARE  
NOT FIT FOR  
A SOLDIER.



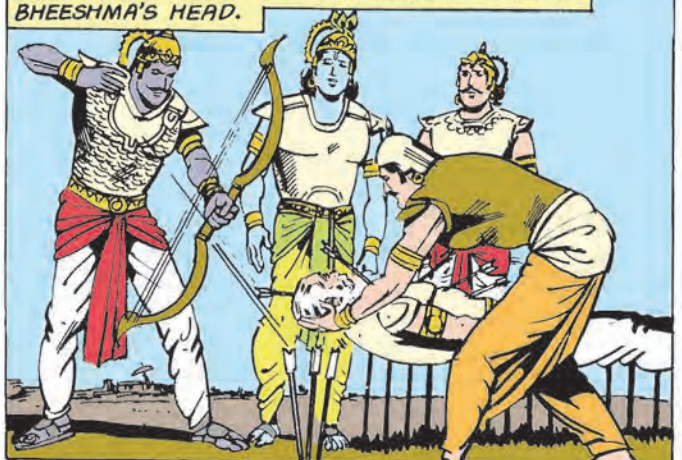
ARJUNA, GIVE  
ME A HEAD-  
REST BEFITTING  
MY BRAVERY  
AND COURAGE .



"ARJUNA SET THREE ARROWS ON HIS  
GANDEEVA ...



"...AND SHOT THEM INTO THE GROUND UNDER  
BHEESHMA'S HEAD.





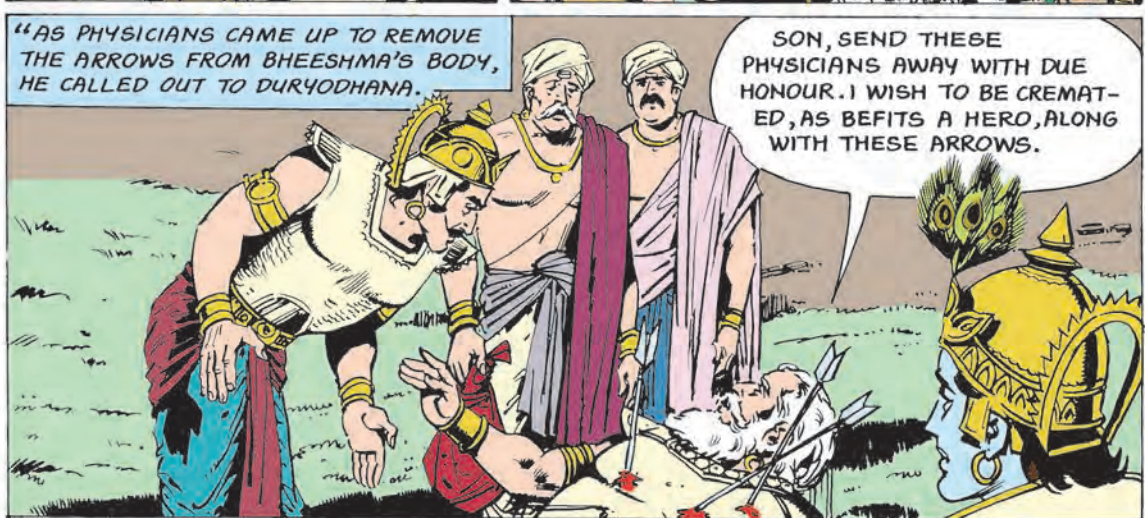
"BHEESHMA WAS PLEASED."



"AND THEN —"



"AS PHYSICIANS CAME UP TO REMOVE THE ARROWS FROM BHEESHMA'S BODY, HE CALLED OUT TO DURYODHANA."

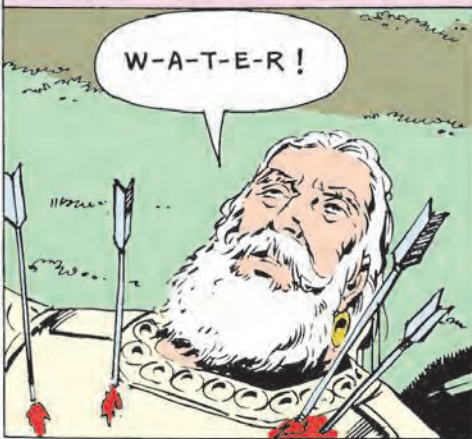


"THE NEXT MORNING A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE, AS WELL AS THE KAURAVA AND PANDAVA WARRIORS, CAME TO PAY THEIR LAST RESPECTS TO BHEESHMA."

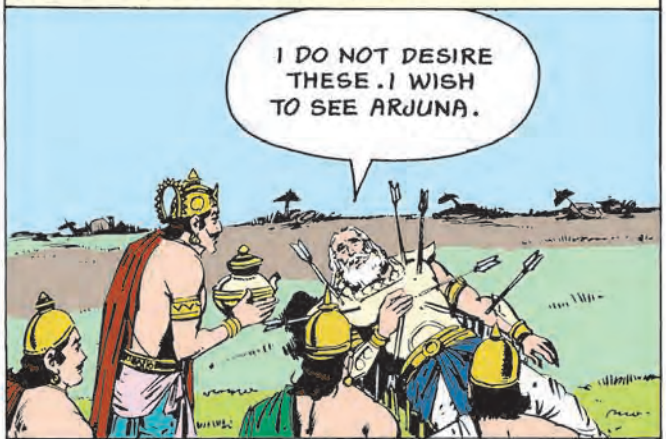




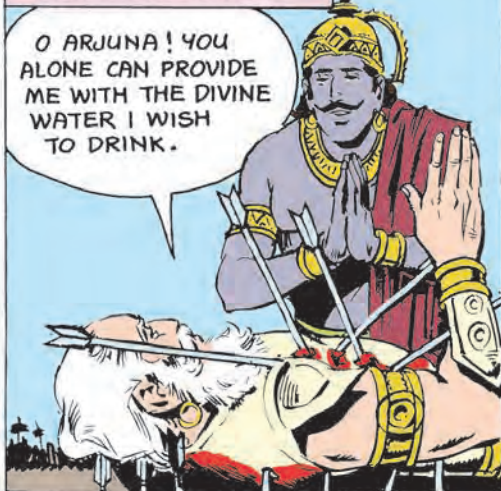
"FAINT WITH EXHAUSTION AND BREATHING HEAVILY, BHEESHMA UTTERED ONLY ONE WORD —



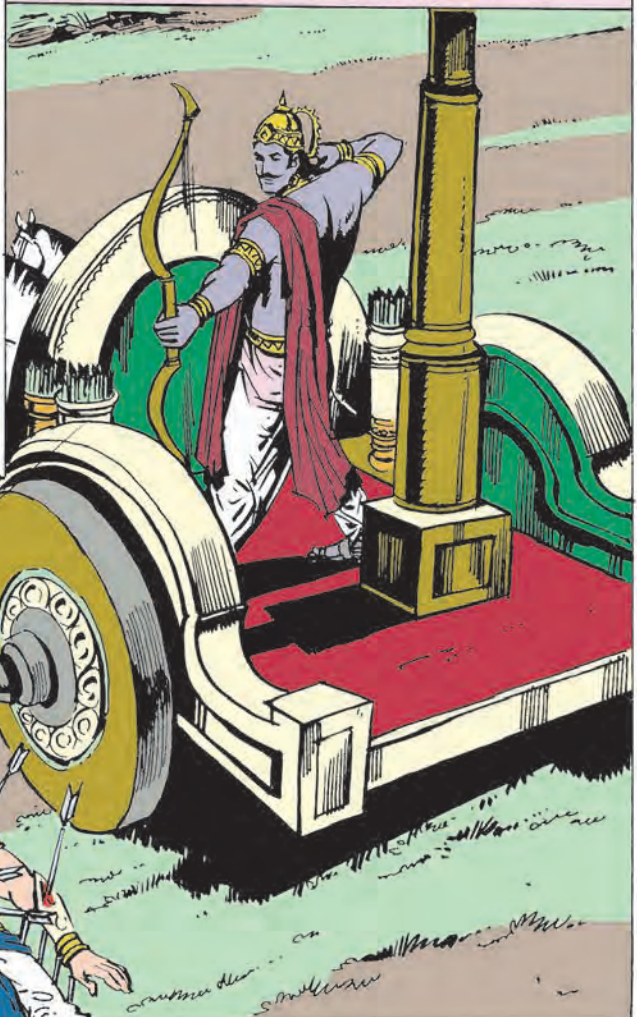
"THE KINGS BROUGHT THE CHOICEST FOOD AND PITCHERS BRIMMING WITH COOL WATER. BUT BHEESHMA WOULD NOT ACCEPT THEM.



"AS ARJUNA ARRIVED —

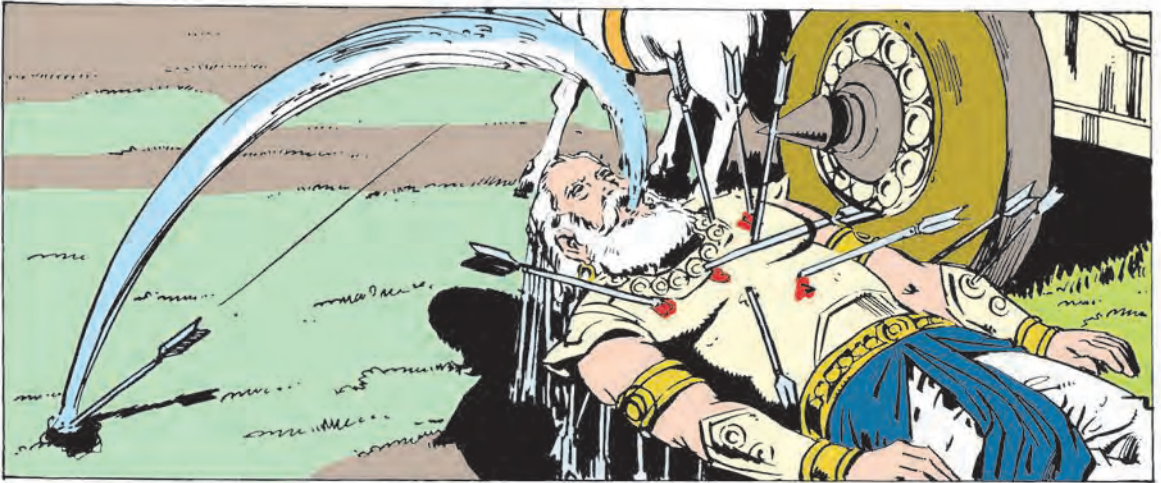


"ARJUNA CLIMBED UP HIS CHARIOT AND SHOT THE PARJANYA\* WEAPON INTO THE EARTH.

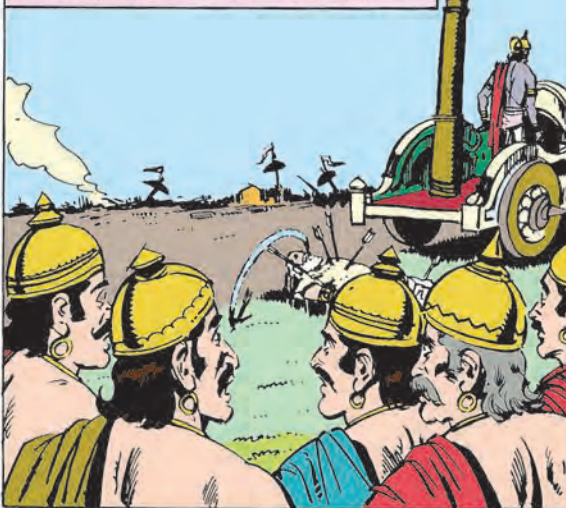


\* LITERALLY, RAIN





"PEOPLE WATCHED IN AMAZEMENT AS BHEESHMA QUAFFED THE WATER."

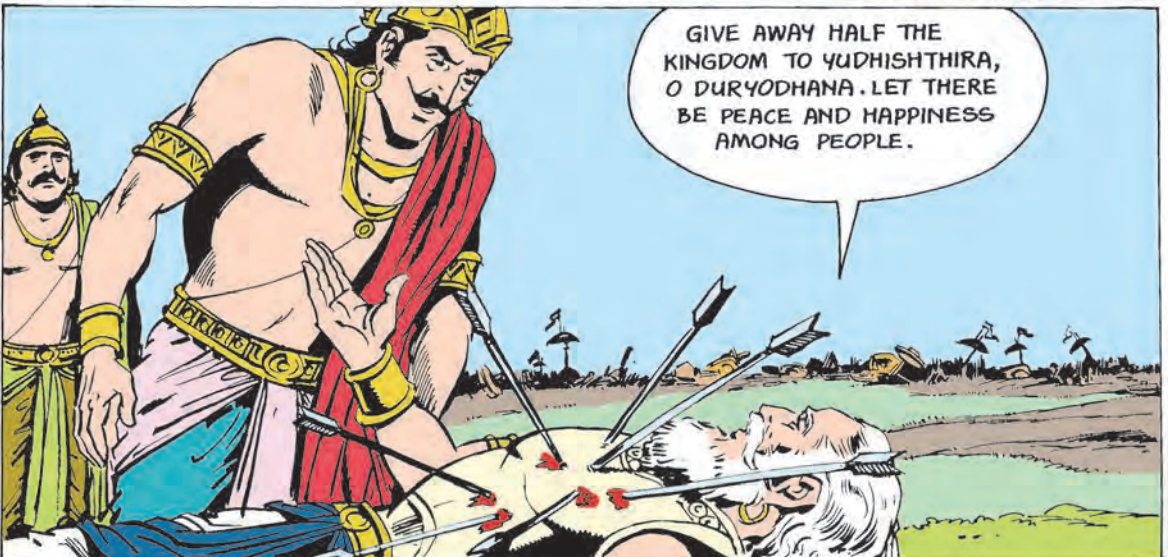


"HIS THIRST QUENCHED, BHEESHMA SAID TO DURYODHANA —

O DURYODHANA, MAKE PEACE WITH THE ALL-POWERFUL ARJUNA. DO NOT DELAY NOW ANY MORE. LET MY DEATH BE THE HARBINGER OF PEACE.



GIVE AWAY HALF THE KINGDOM TO YUDHISHTHIRA, O DURYODHANA. LET THERE BE PEACE AND HAPPINESS AMONG PEOPLE.





"BUT BHEESHMA'S WORDS OF WISDOM DID NOT APPEAL TO DURYODHANA AND HE LEFT SAYING —



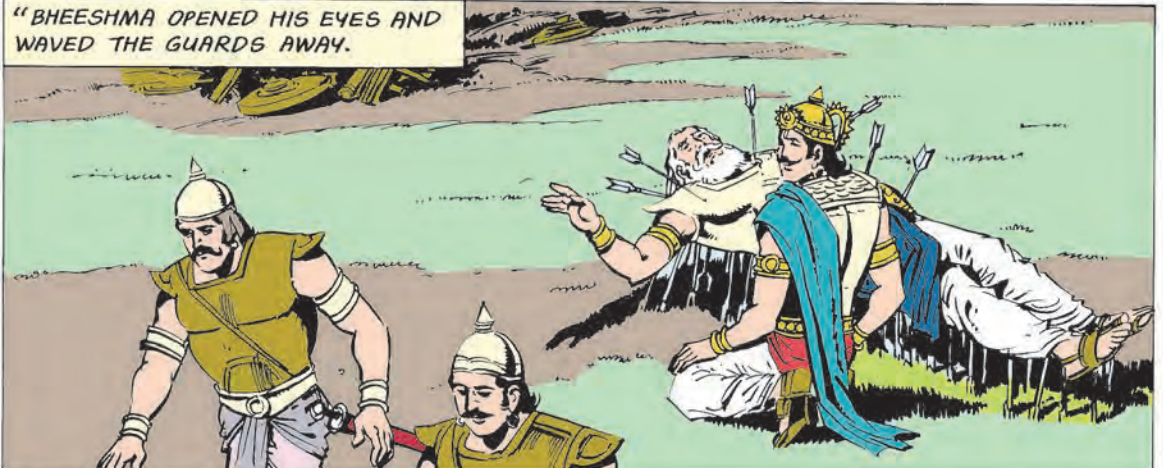
"KARNA WAS FILLED WITH A NAMELESS FEAR ON HEARING OF THE FALL OF BHEESHMA .



"HE HESITANTLY APPROACHED BHEESHMA. HE WAS IN TEARS .

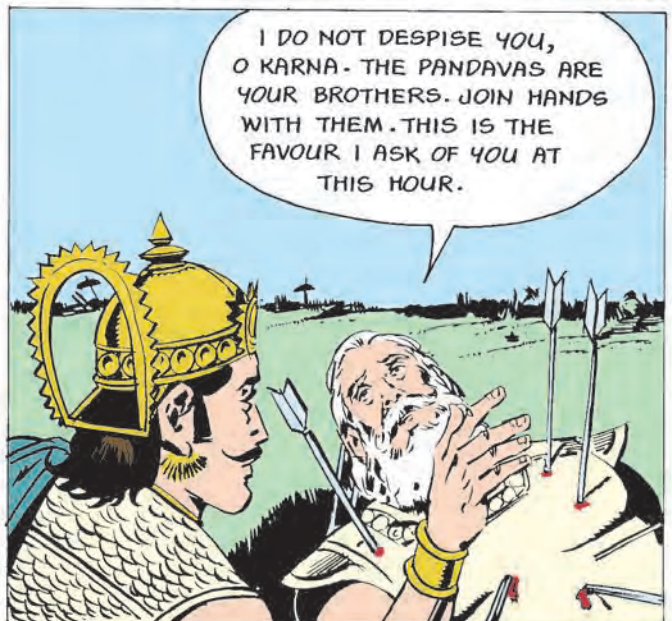
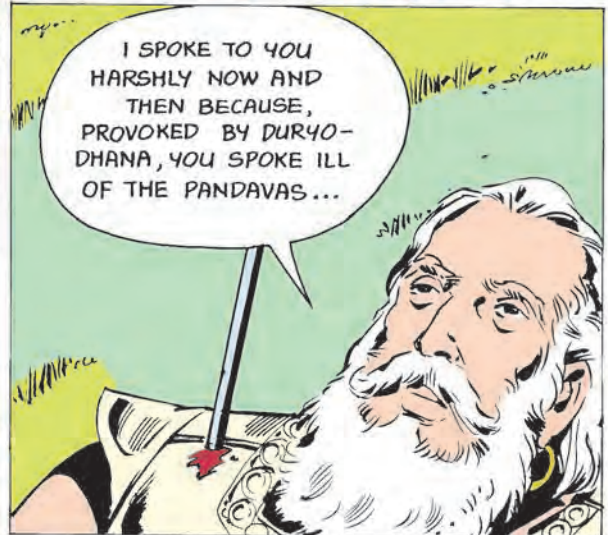
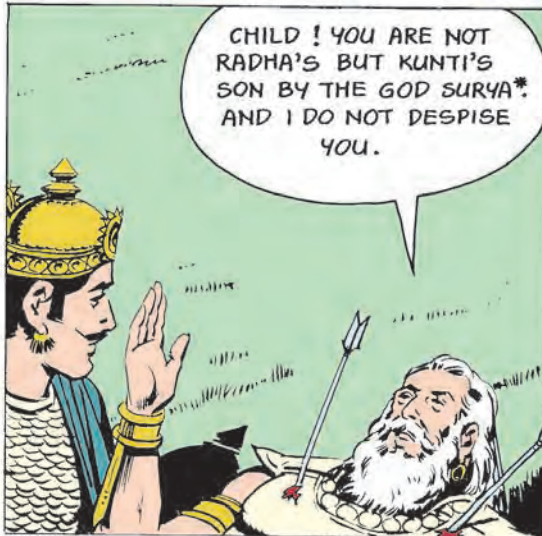


"BHEESHMA OPENED HIS EYES AND WAVED THE GUARDS AWAY.





"BHEESHMA EMBRACED KARNA AFFECTIONATELY."



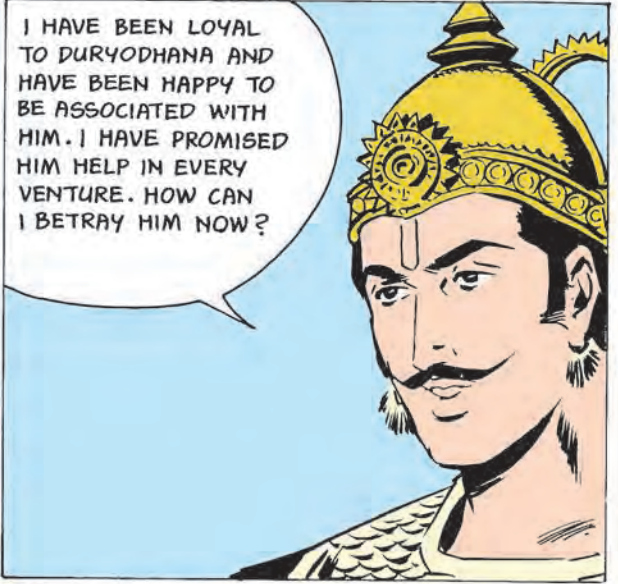


"KARNA REPLIED —

O BHEESHMA !  
I KNOW THAT I AM THE  
SON OF KUNTI, NOT OF  
RADHA. BUT MY MOTHER  
ABANDONED ME AT  
BIRTH.



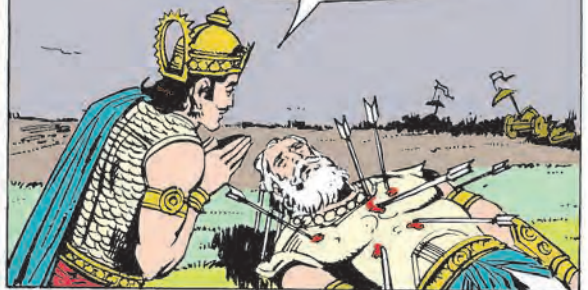
I HAVE BEEN LOYAL  
TO DURYODHANA AND  
HAVE BEEN HAPPY TO  
BE ASSOCIATED WITH  
HIM. I HAVE PROMISED  
HIM HELP IN EVERY  
VENTURE. HOW CAN  
I BETRAY HIM NOW?



I WILL SACRIFICE MY  
WEALTH, MY FAMILY, MY VERY  
LIFE FOR DURYODHANA. I WISH  
TO FOLLOW MY DHARMA AND  
CONTINUE FIGHTING ARJUNA.



BLESS ME, O GRANDSIRE, THAT  
I MAY FIGHT THIS WAR. FORGIVE  
ME MY IMPERTINENCE AND  
THE HARSH WORDS I MAY  
HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU.



VERY WELL, O KARNA,  
IF YOU ARE SO RESOLVED.  
FIGHT THE WAR AND  
ATTAIN HEAVEN.

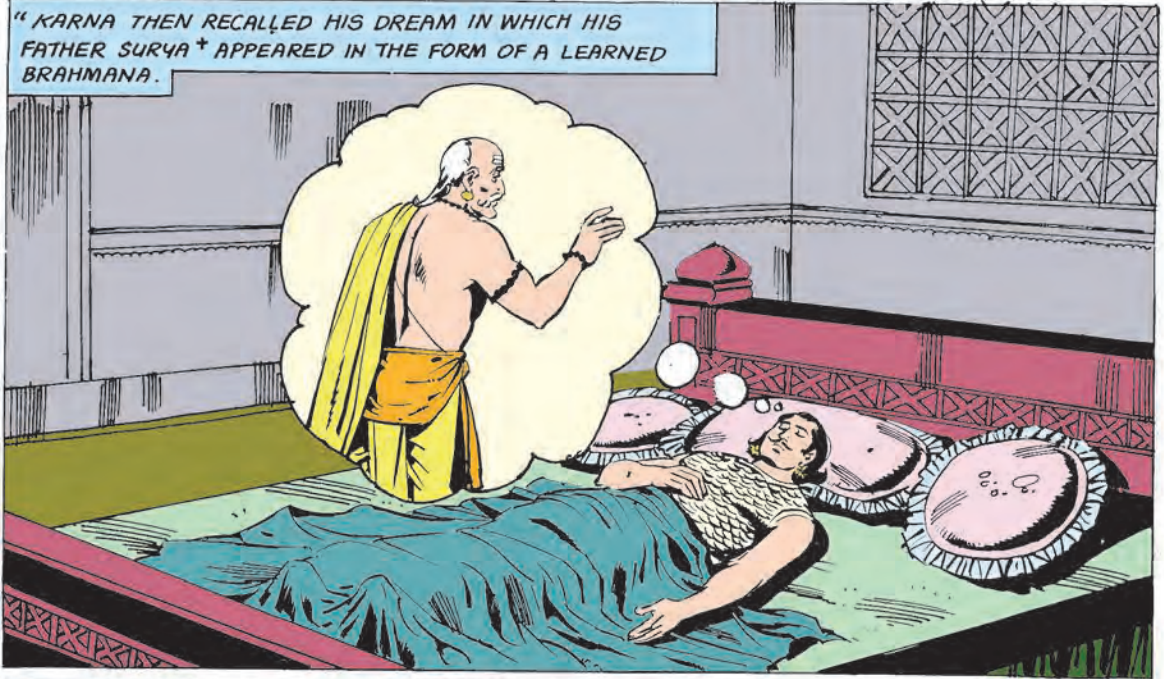


KARNA WENT  
AWAY TO JOIN  
DURYODHANA.





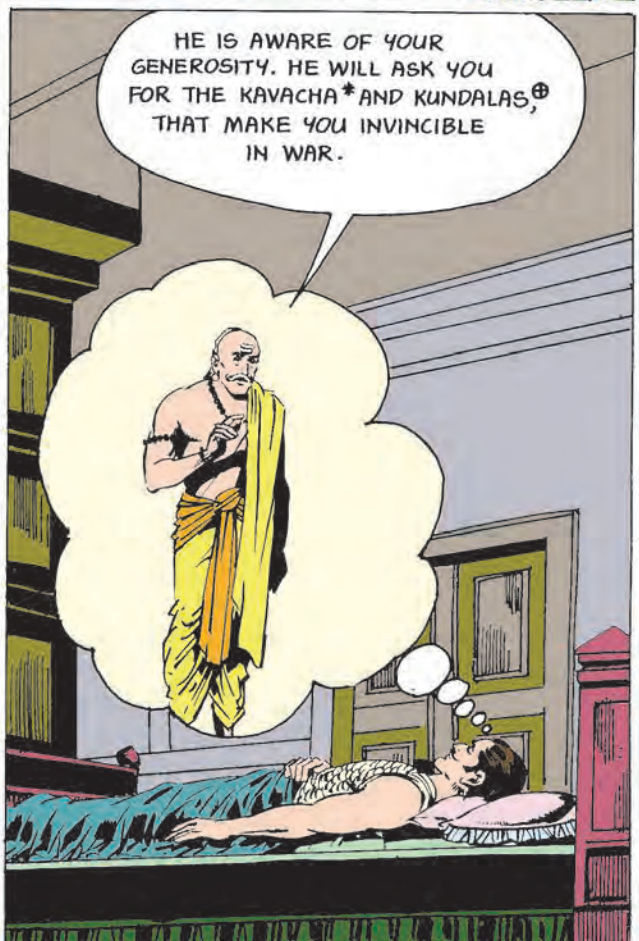
"KARNA THEN RECALLED HIS DREAM IN WHICH HIS FATHER SURYA\* APPEARED IN THE FORM OF A LEARNED BRAHMANA.



SON, INDRA IS ABOUT TO COME TO YOU IN THE GUISE OF A BRAHMANA.



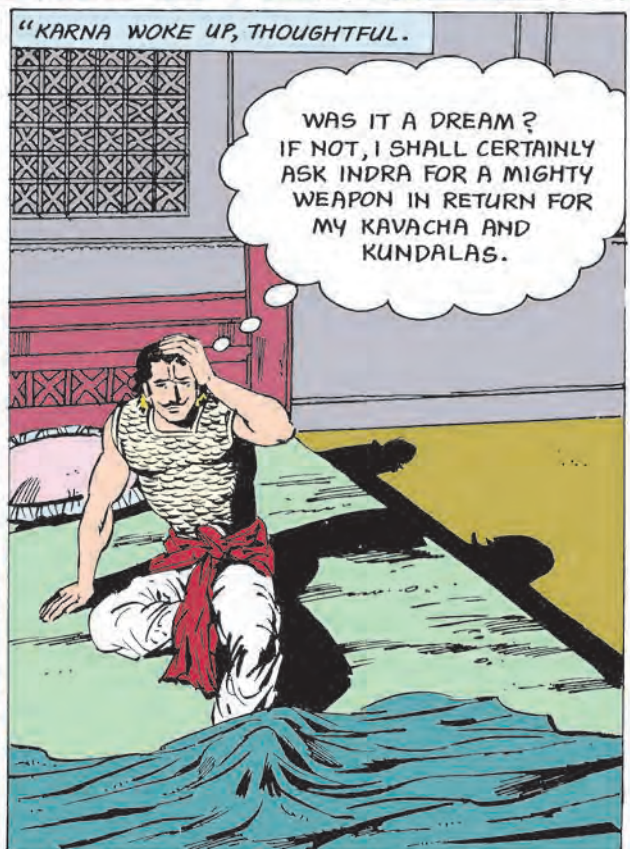
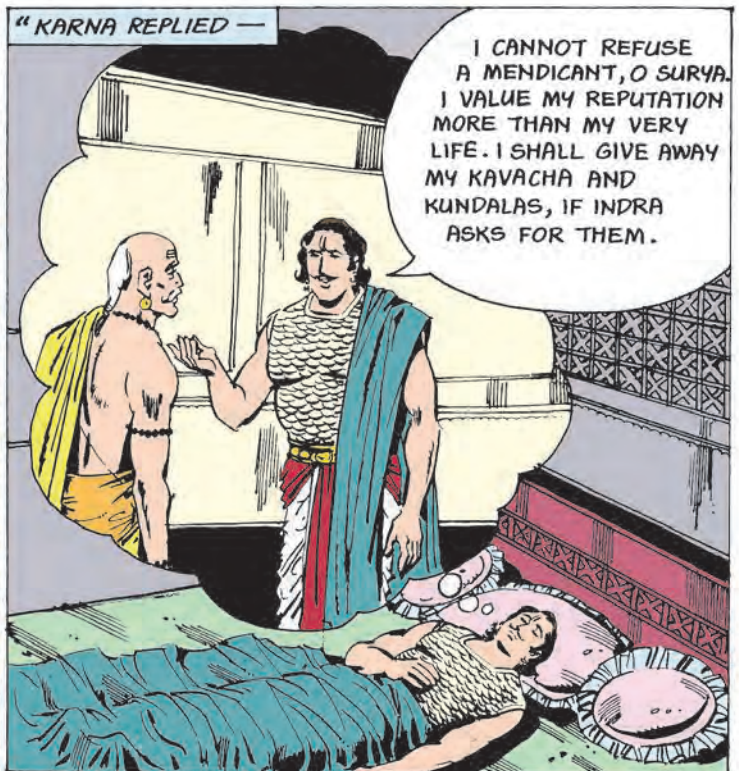
HE IS AWARE OF YOUR GENEROSITY. HE WILL ASK YOU FOR THE KAVACHA\* AND KUNDALAS,⊕ THAT MAKE YOU INVINCIBLE IN WAR.



+ KARNA WAS BORN TO KUNTI WITH THE BLESSINGS OF SURYA, THE SUN GOD.

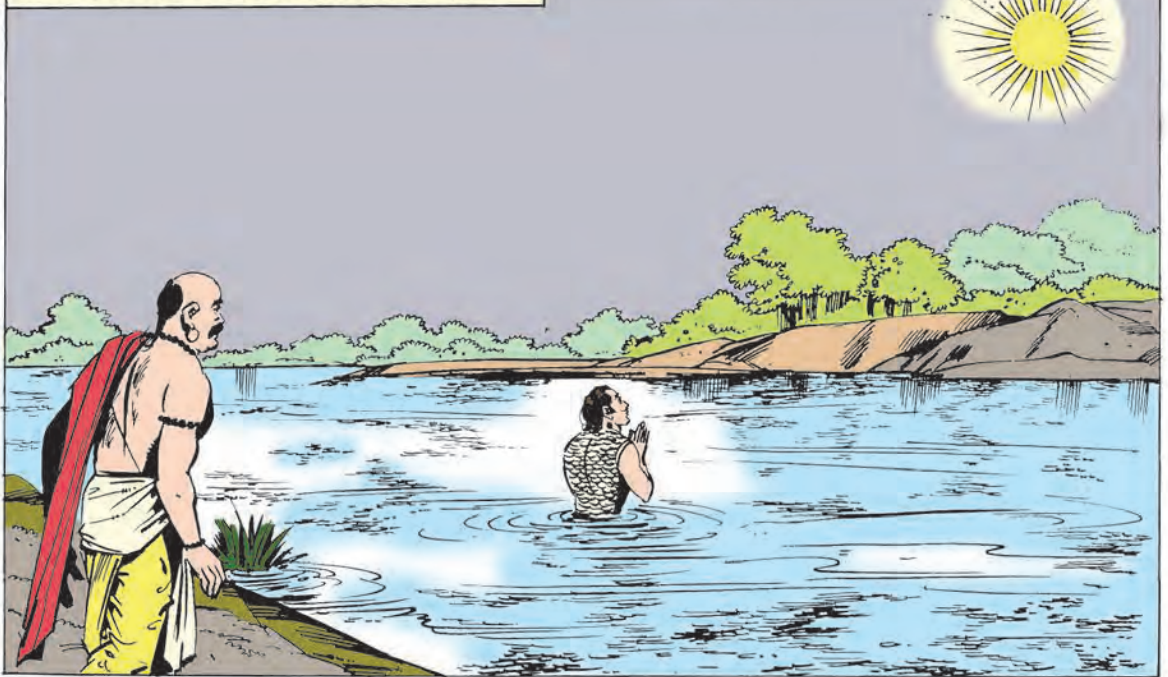
\* ARMOUR ⊕ EAR-RINGS.



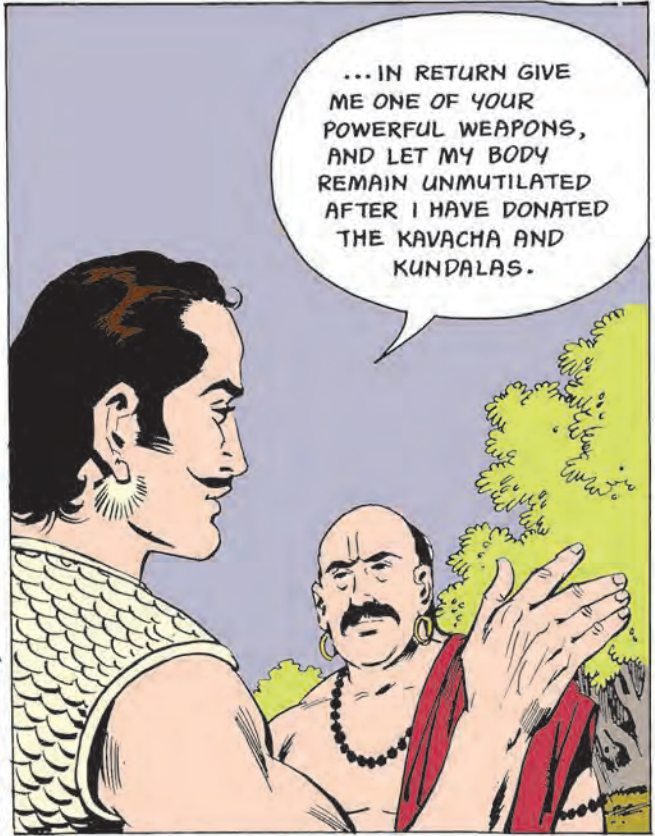
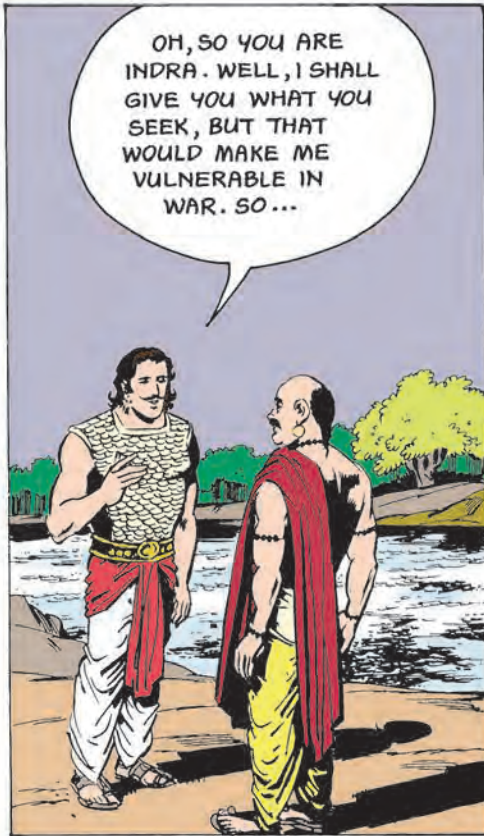




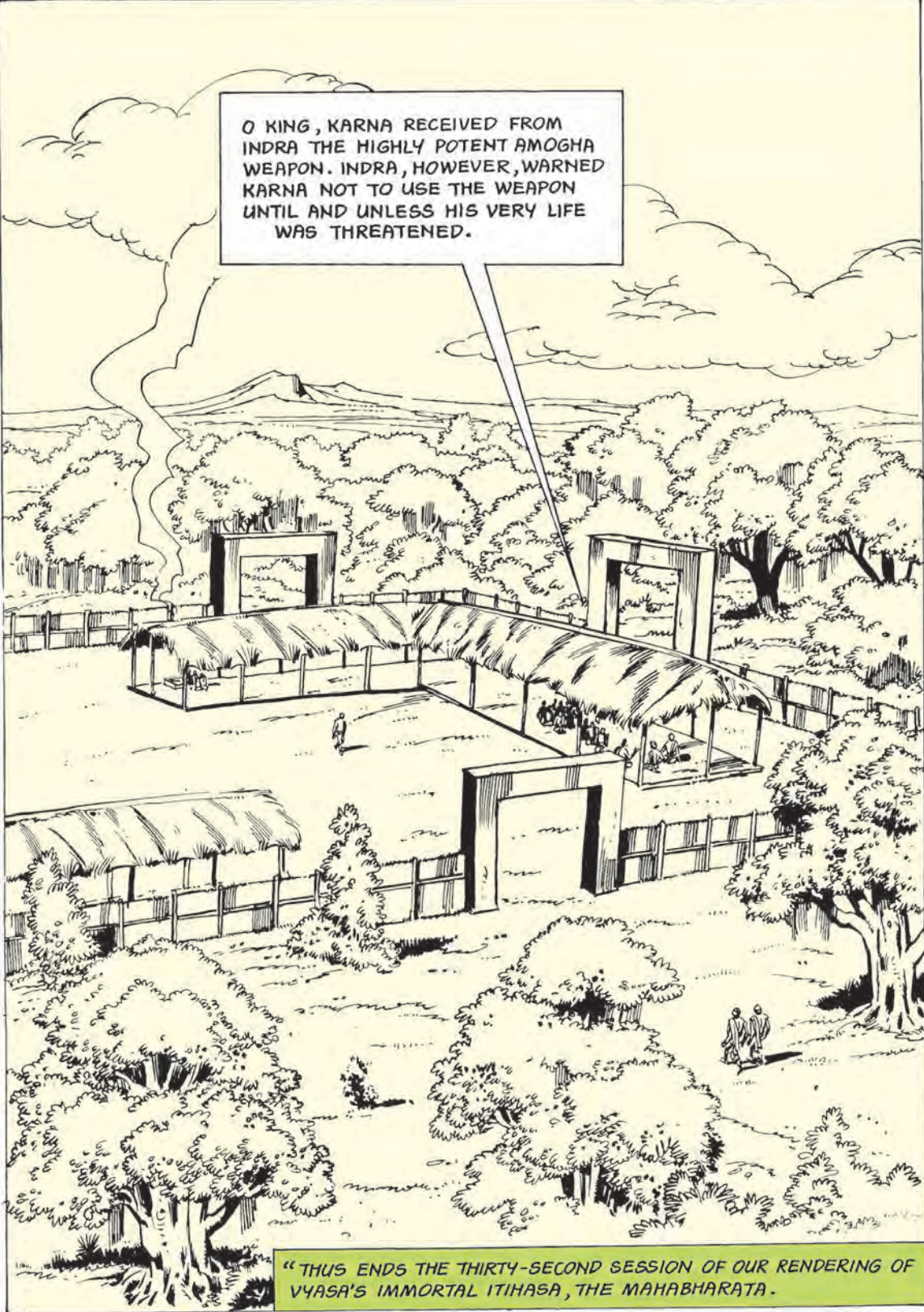
" IN THE MORNING AS KARNA STOOD IN THE STREAM OF A RIVER, PAYING HOMAGE TO SURYA, A BRAHMANA APPROACHED HIM.











O KING, KARNA RECEIVED FROM INDRA THE HIGHLY POTENT AMOGHA WEAPON. INDRA, HOWEVER, WARNED KARNA NOT TO USE THE WEAPON UNTIL AND UNLESS HIS VERY LIFE WAS THREATENED.

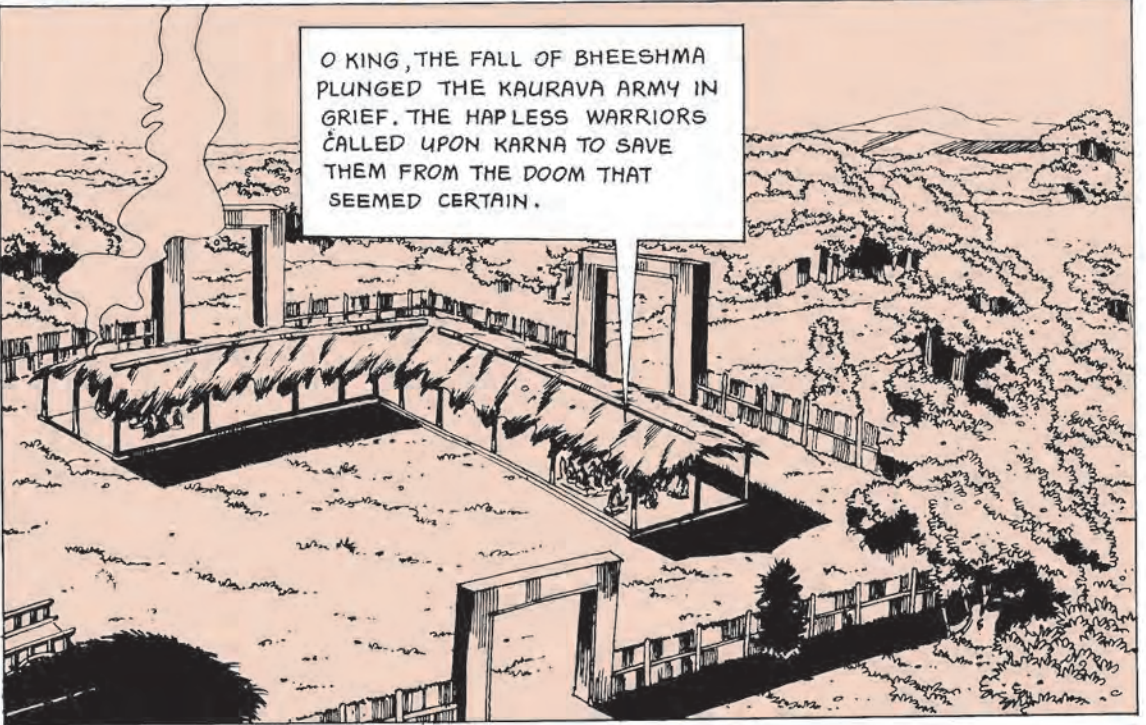
"THUS ENDS THE THIRTY-SECOND SESSION OF OUR RENDERING OF VYASA'S IMMORTAL ITIHASA, THE MAHABHARATA."



# Mahabharata-33

## DRONA'S VOW

O KING, THE FALL OF BHEESHMA PLUNGED THE KAURAVA ARMY IN GRIEF. THE HAPLESS WARRIORS CALLED UPON KARNA TO SAVE THEM FROM THE DOOM THAT SEEMED CERTAIN.



"THE GRIEF-STRICKEN KAURAVAS REMEMBERED KARNA.

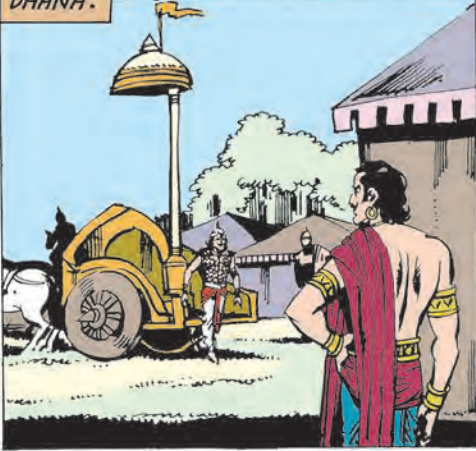
THE TIME HAS COME FOR KARNA TO COME TO OUR AID. HE HAD PROMISED TO ABSTAIN FROM THE WAR AS LONG AS BHEESHMA WAS ALIVE.

YES, THIS IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR HIM TO PROVE HIS VALOUR. LET US SUMMON HIM.





"RISING TO THE OCCASION, KARNA ARRIVED RIDING HIS CHARIOT TO MEET THE GRIEF-STRIKEN DURYO-DHANA."



THE MIGHTY BHEESHMA HAS FALLEN. IT IS AS IF THE SUN ITSELF HAS FALLEN FROM THE SKIES.



THE KAURAVA FORCES HAVE BEEN ORPHANED AND DEMORALISED. I MUST PROTECT THEM AS ABLY AS DID BHEESHMA.



GIVE ME, O WARRIORS, THE BEST OF WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT, SO THAT I MAY DISCHARGE MY DUTY OF PROTECTING YOU AT THIS HOUR OF DISTRESS.



"KARNA'S CHARIOT WAS THEN FILLED WITH WEAPONS."



"KARNA PREPARED HIMSELF FULLY FOR THE BATTLE AHEAD."





"DURYODHANA THEN SAID —

O KARNA,  
I REGARD YOU AS THE MAN  
WHO CAN SAVE US AFTER  
BHEESHMA. BEHOLD THESE  
GREAT WARRIORS, AND  
TELL ME...

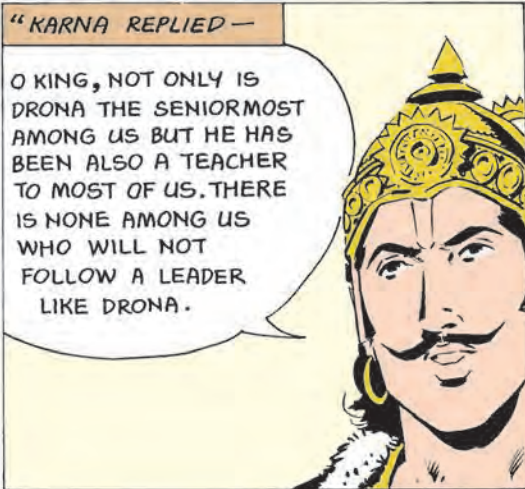


... WHO, AMONG THEM  
IS FIT TO BE OUR NEXT  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

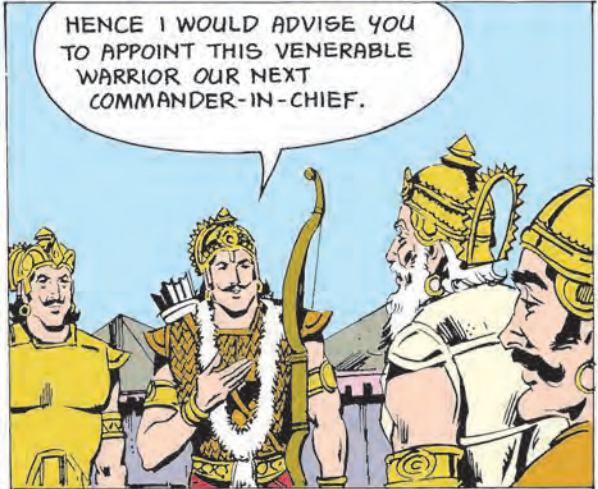


"KARNA REPLIED —

O KING, NOT ONLY IS  
DRONA THE SENIORMOST  
AMONG US BUT HE HAS  
BEEN ALSO A TEACHER  
TO MOST OF US. THERE  
IS NONE AMONG US  
WHO WILL NOT  
FOLLOW A LEADER  
LIKE DRONA.



HENCE I WOULD ADVISE YOU  
TO APPOINT THIS VENERABLE  
WARRIOR OUR NEXT  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.



"DURYODHANA SAID TO DRONA —

O LION AMONG MEN!  
I BESEECH YOU TO BE OUR  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AND  
TO LEAD US INTO BATTLE.





"DRONA REPLIED —

O KING, I AM WELL VERSED IN ALL THE MARTIAL ARTS. I ACCEPT YOUR OFFER, BUT ON ONE CONDITION.



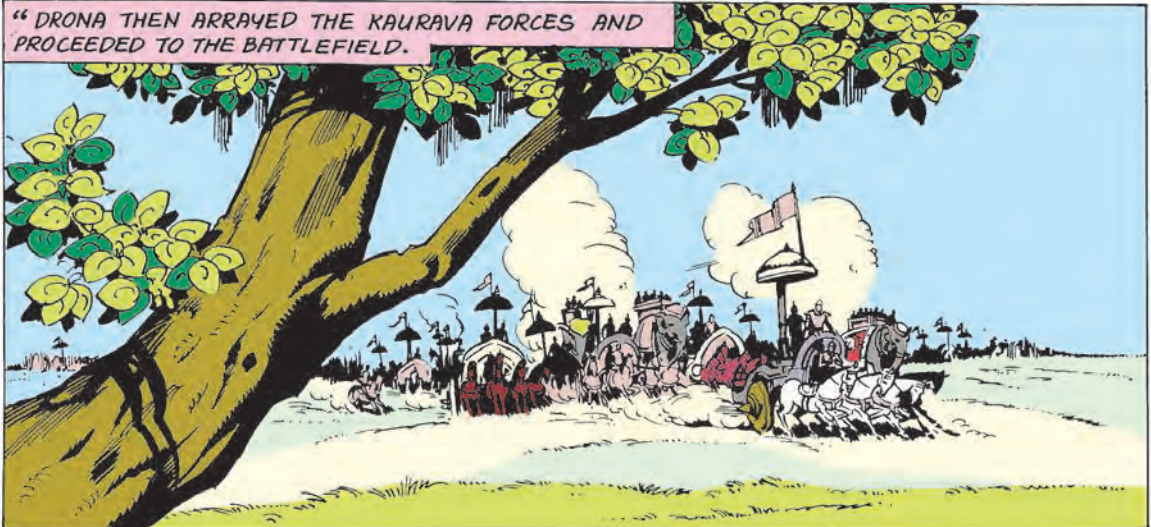
I SHALL FIGHT UNTO DEATH ALL THE PANDAVA WARRIORS EXCEPT DHRSHTA-DYUMNA FOR HE IS DESTINED TO KILL ME.



"DURYODHANA THEN PERFORMED THE INVESTITURE CEREMONY OF DRONA AS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE KAURAVA FORCES.



"DRONA THEN ARRAYED THE KAURAVA FORCES AND PROCEEDED TO THE BATTLEFIELD.





"WITH THE MIGHTY KAURAVA WARRIORS BY HIS SIDE,  
DRONA LAUNCHED A FIERCE ATTACK ON THE PANDAVA ARMY."





"THE PANDAVA FORCES WERE SCATTERED BEFORE THE ONSLAUGHT."



"YUDHISHTHIRA SAID TO ARJUNA AND DHRISTADYUMNA —





"DRONA SAID TO DURYODHANA —

O KING! BY GIVING ME THE COMMAND OF THE FORCES, YOU HAVE BESTOWED AN HONOUR ON ME. TELL ME, WHAT MAY I DO TO PLEASE YOU?



"DURYODHANA SAID —

O REVERED ONE! IF YOU WISH TO PLEASE ME, SEIZE YUDHISHTHIRA AND BRING HIM BEFORE ME.



"DRONA ASKED —

O KING! YOU WANT ME ONLY TO CAPTURE HIM? YOU DON'T WANT HIM TO BE KILLED?

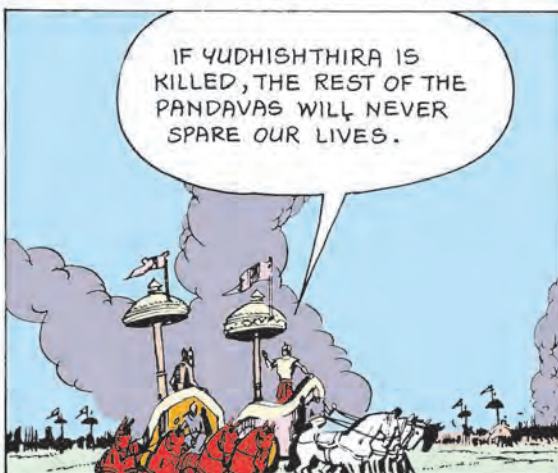


"DURYODHANA REPLIED —

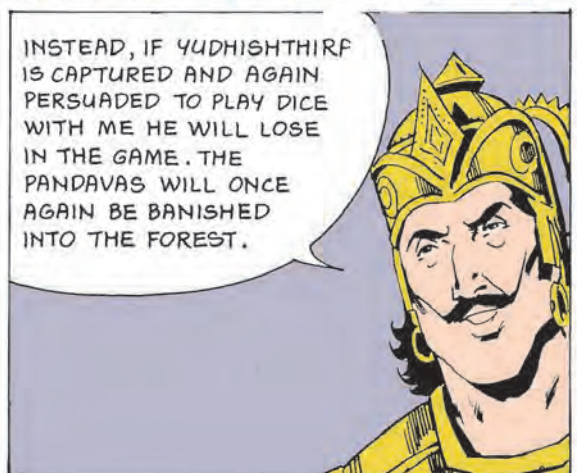
BECAUSE, O VENERABLE ONE, YUDHISHTHIRA'S DEATH WILL SPELL NOT MY VICTORY, BUT MY DOOM.



IF YUDHISHTHIRA IS KILLED, THE REST OF THE PANDAVAS WILL NEVER SPARE OUR LIVES.



INSTEAD, IF YUDHISHTHIRA IS CAPTURED AND AGAIN PERSUADED TO PLAY DICE WITH ME HE WILL LOSE IN THE GAME. THE PANDAVAS WILL ONCE AGAIN BE BANISHED INTO THE FOREST.

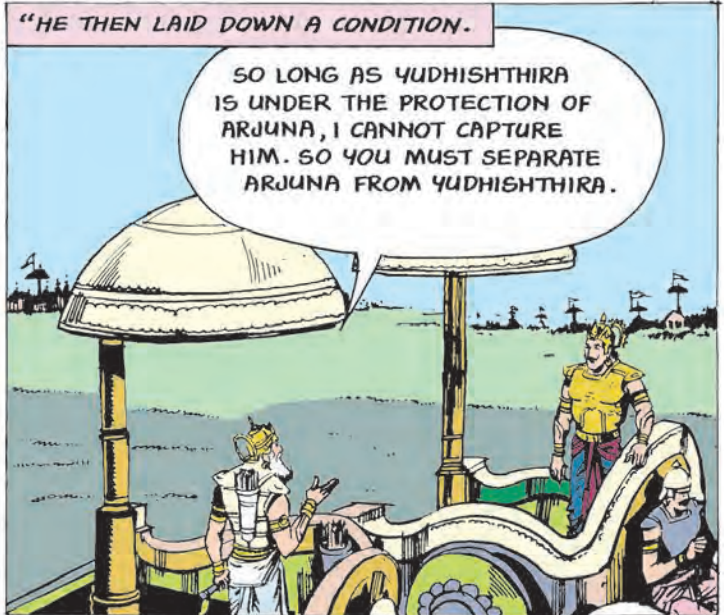




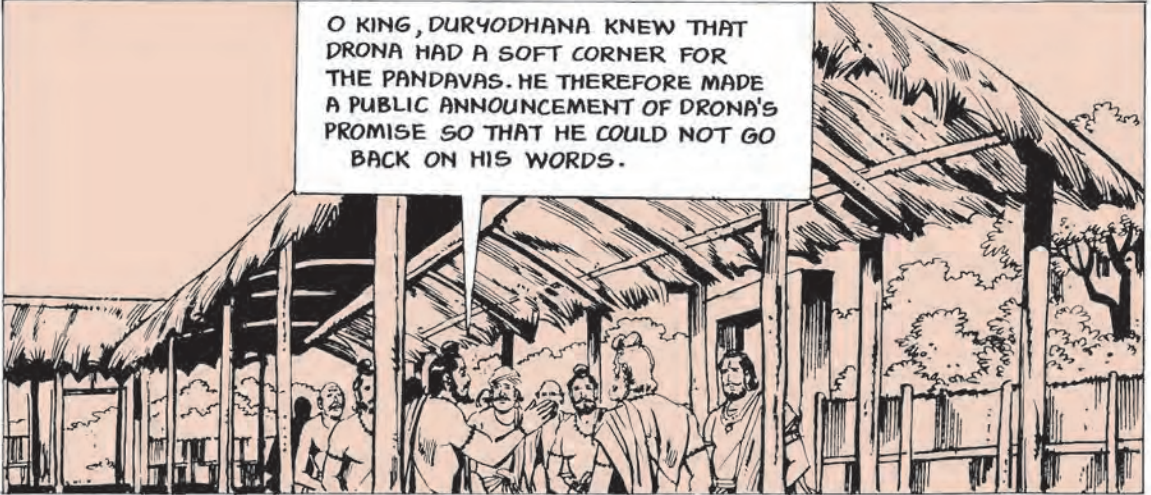
"DRONA WAS THOUGHTFUL —



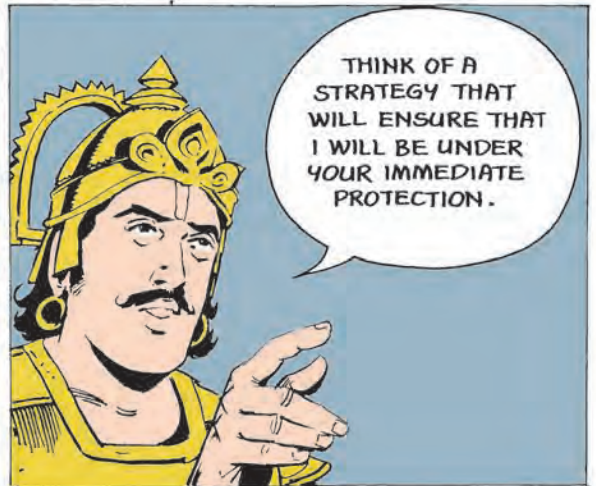
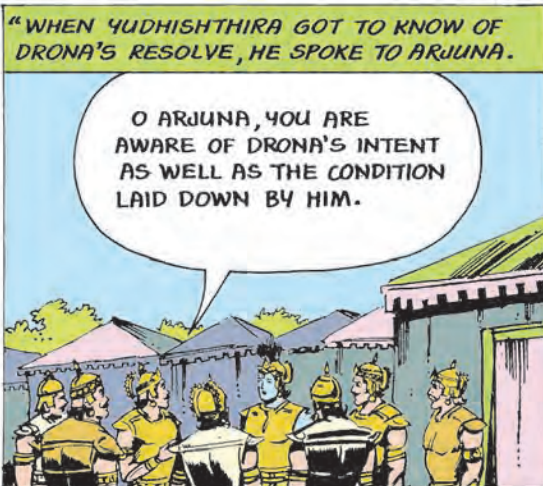
"HE THEN LAID DOWN A CONDITION.



O KING, DURYODHANA KNEW THAT DRONA HAD A SOFT CORNER FOR THE PANDAVAS. HE THEREFORE MADE A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF DRONA'S PROMISE SO THAT HE COULD NOT GO BACK ON HIS WORDS.



"WHEN YUDHISHTHIRA GOT TO KNOW OF DRONA'S RESOLVE, HE SPOKE TO ARJUNA.





"ARJUNA REPLIED —

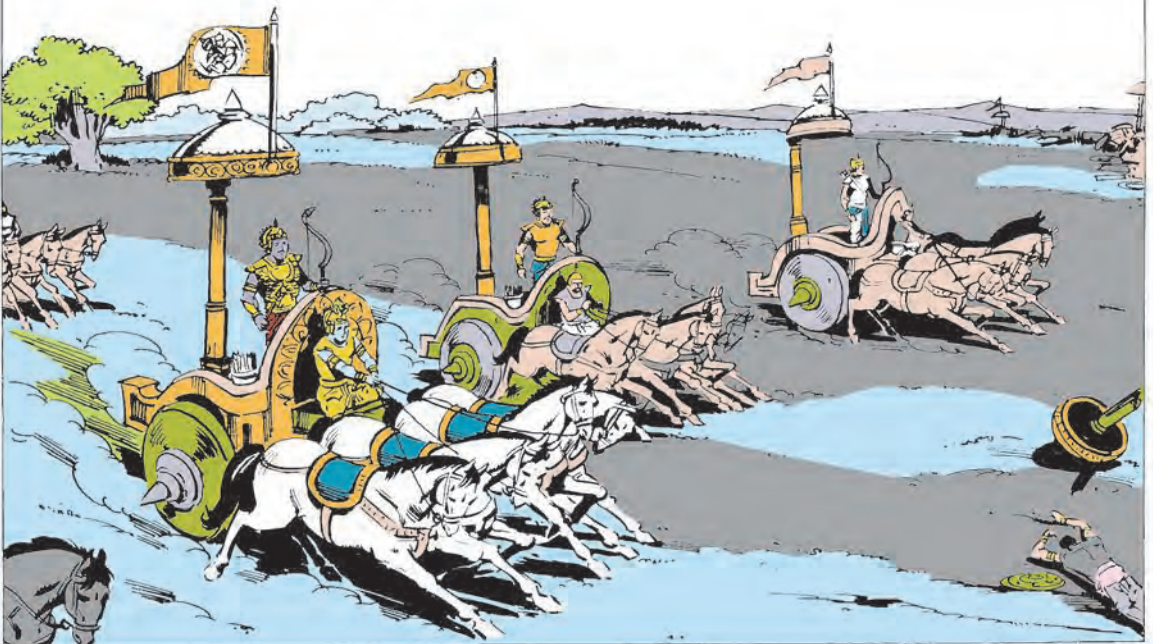
O KING, IT IS AS  
REPREHENSIBLE FOR ME  
TO KILL MY TEACHER AS  
IT IS TO ABANDON YOU.  
HENCE I SHALL NOT LET  
EITHER HAPPEN.



THE SKY MAY FALL TO PIECES  
AND THE EARTH MAY SPLIT ASUNDER,  
BUT DRONA WILL NOT TAKE YOU  
CAPTIVE AS LONG AS I AM ALIVE.



"AFTER THIS BRIEF CONFERENCE AMONG THE PANDAVAS, THE WAR WAS RESUMED BY  
THE BELLIGERENT ARMIES.





"DRONA ATTACKED AND SCATTERED  
DHRISHTADYUMNA'S FORCES."



"KING PAURAVA AND ABHIMANYU TORMENTED  
ONE ANOTHER WITH A VOLLEY OF ARROWS."



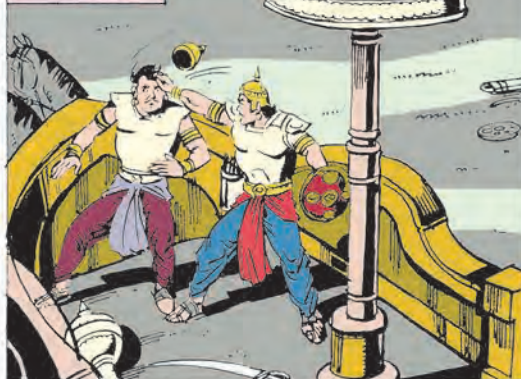
"PAURAVA MANAGED TO BREAK  
ABHIMANYU'S BOW TO PIECES."



"ABHIMANYU THEN TOOK UP A SWORD  
AND A SHIELD AND CHARGED AT PAURAVA."



"HE CLIMBED ON TO PAURAVA'S  
CHARIOT AND GRABBED HIM BY  
HIS HAIR."



"ABHIMANYU THEN FLUNG PAURAVA OFF HIS  
CHARIOT."





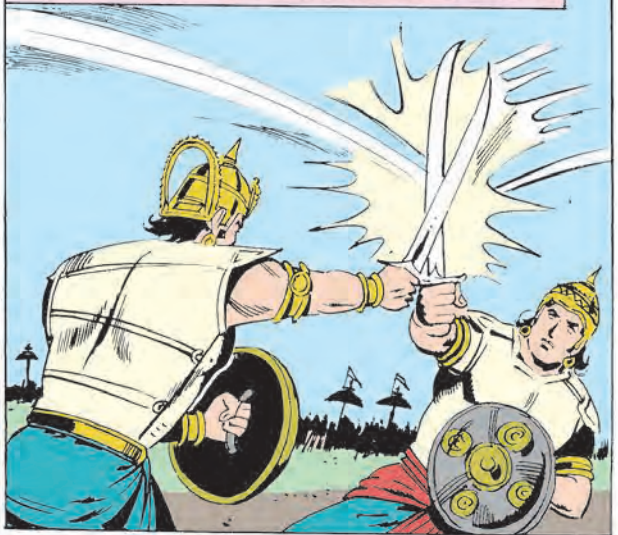
"AN ENRAGED JAYADRATHA COULD NOT TOLERATE PAURAVA BEING HUMBLIED THUS. HE JUMPED OFF HIS CHARIOT IN A FURY."



"SEEING JAYADRATHA COMING, ABHIMANYU RUSHED AT HIM."



"BOTH FOUGHT WITH MATCHLESS VALOUR."

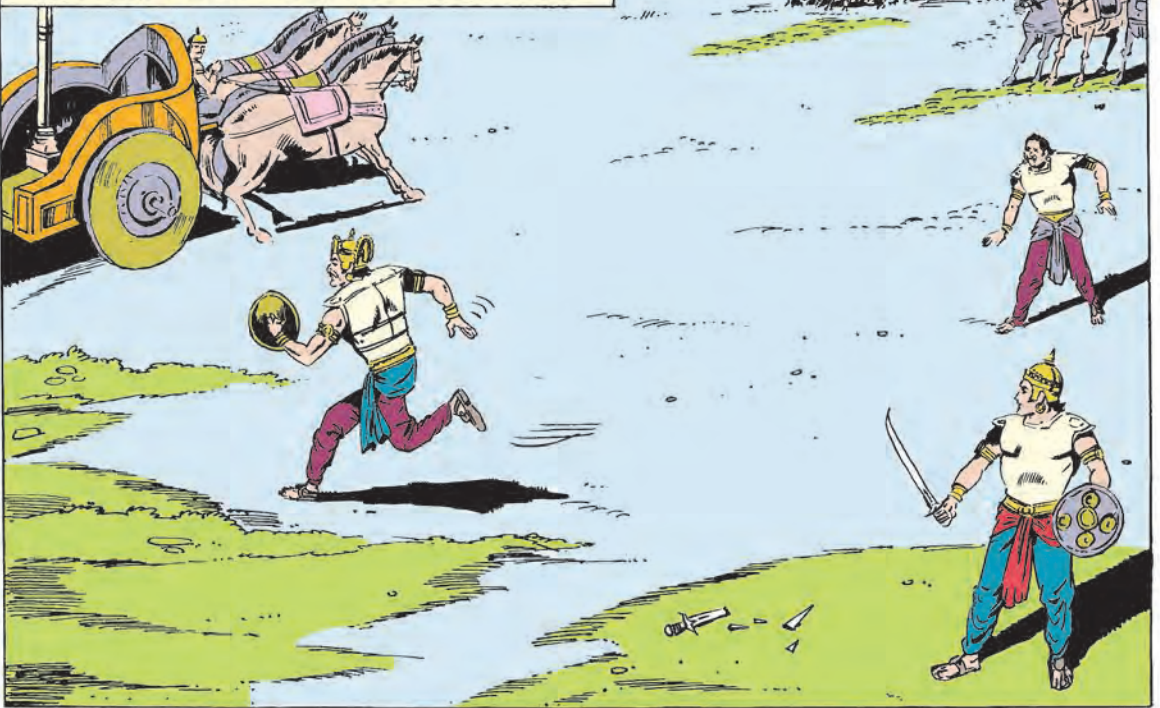


"JAYADRATHA STRUCK ABHIMANYU'S SHIELD BUT HIS SWORD WAS SMASHED INTO PIECES."





"JAYADRATHA RUSHED BACK TO HIS CHARIOT."



"ABHIMANYU TOO RETURNED TO HIS CHARIOT AND WAS SOON SURROUNDED BY SEVERAL KAURAVA WARRIORS."





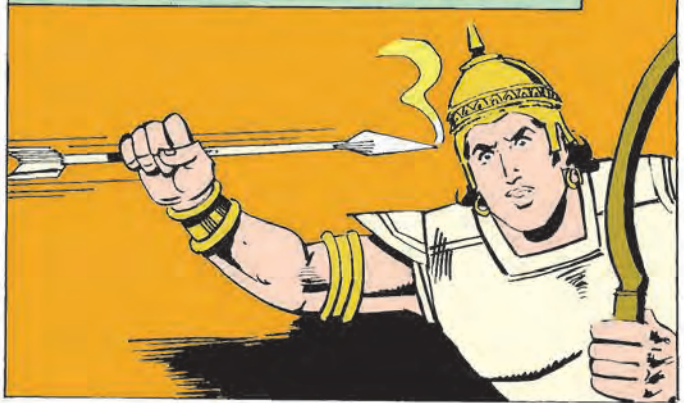
"ABHIMANYU FOUGHT THEM BRAVELY."



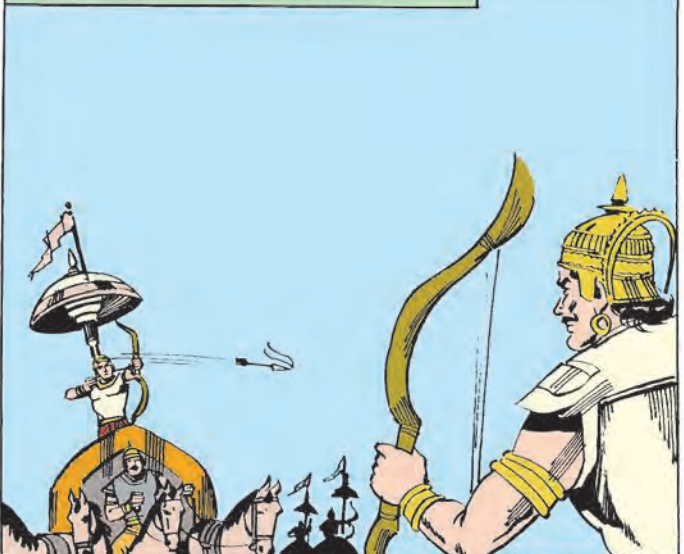
"SHALYA RELEASED A POWERFUL WEAPON ON ABHIMANYU."



"BUT ABHIMANYU GRABBED IT BY HAND..."



"...AND SENT IT BACK TO SHALYA."





"THE WEAPON KILLED THE CHARIOTEER AND FLUNG SHALYA OFF THE CHARIOT. THE PANDAVAS CHEERED ABHIMANYU."



"HIGHLY ENRAGED, SHALYA RUSHED AT ABHIMANYU WITH A MACE."



"ABHIMANYU TOO TOOK UP A MACE BUT BHEEMA INTERVENED."



"BHEEMA AND SHALYA HAD A TERRIBLE FIGHT WITH MACES."

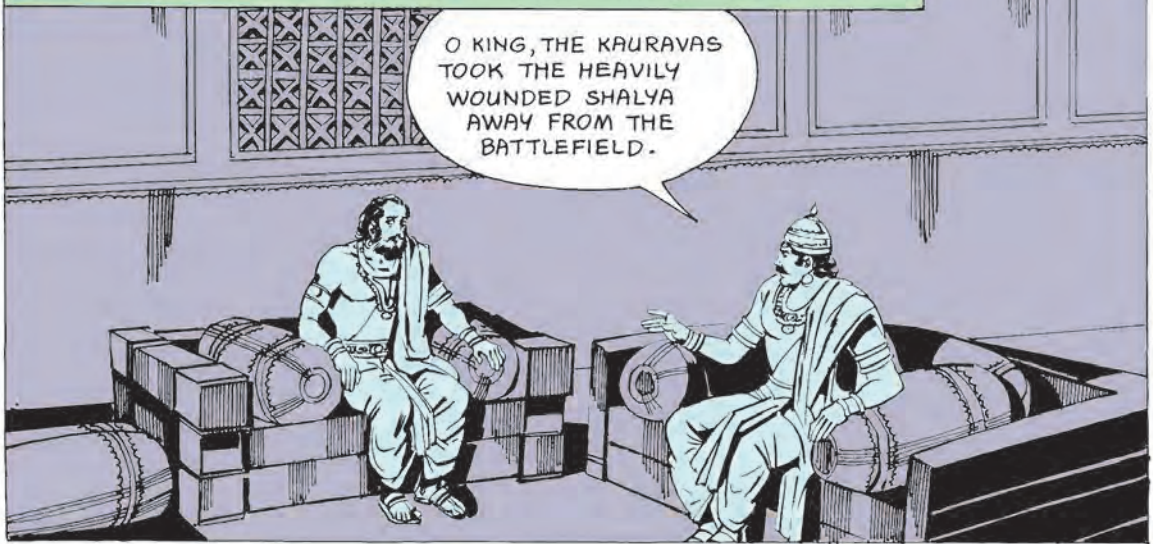


"... AND BHEEMA KNOCKED SHALYA UNCONSCIOUS."

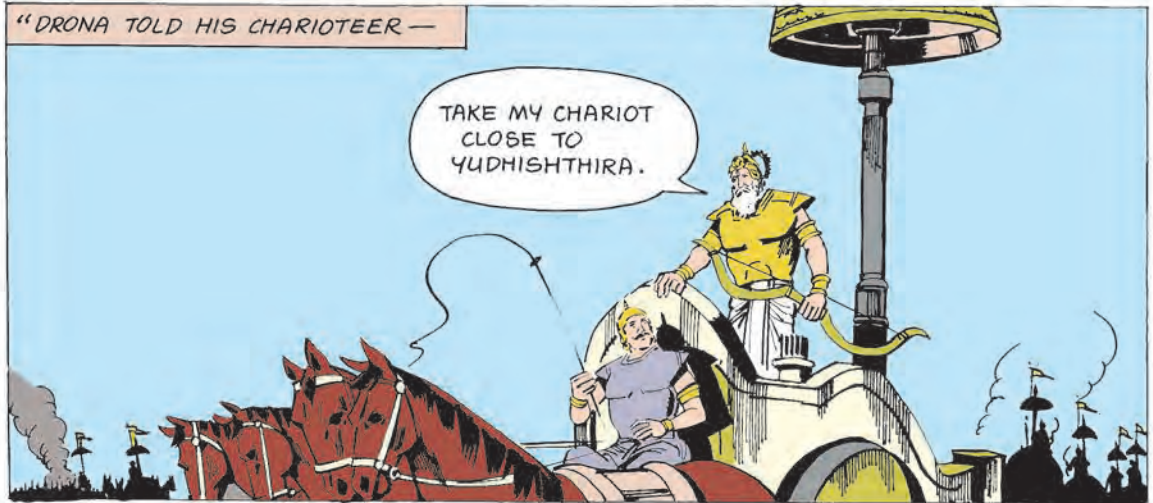




"NARRATING THE WAR TO THE BLIND DHRITARASHTRA, SANJAYA SAID.



"DRONA TOLD HIS CHARIOTEER —



"THE PANDAVA WARRIORS TRIED THEIR BEST TO CONTAIN DRONA'S ADVANCE.





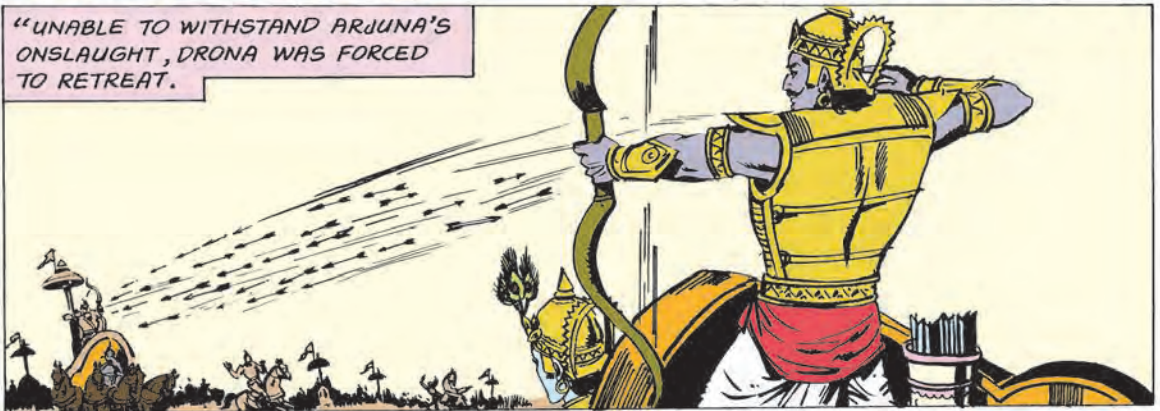
"BUT DRONA SOON REACHED CLOSE TO YUDHISHTHIRA. THE PANDAVA SOLDIERS WERE PANIC-STRICKEN."



"BUT ARJUNA CHARGED UP TO THE DEFENCE OF YUDHISHTHIRA."

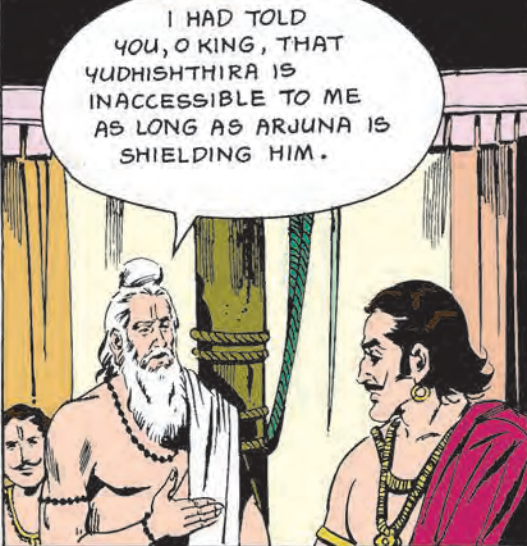


"UNABLE TO WITHSTAND ARJUNA'S ONSLAUGHT, DRONA WAS FORCED TO RETREAT."

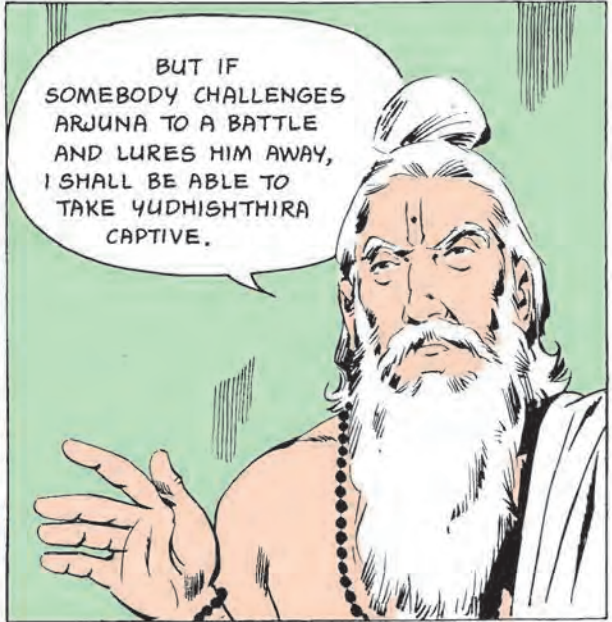




"AN EMBARRASSED DRONA SAID TO DURYODHANA —



I HAD TOLD YOU, O KING, THAT YUDHISHTHIRA IS INACCESSIBLE TO ME AS LONG AS ARJUNA IS SHIELDING HIM.



BUT IF SOMEBODY CHALLENGES ARJUNA TO A BATTLE AND LURES HIM AWAY, I SHALL BE ABLE TO TAKE YUDHISHTHIRA CAPTIVE.

"SUSHARMA, THE KING OF TRIGARTAS, SAID —



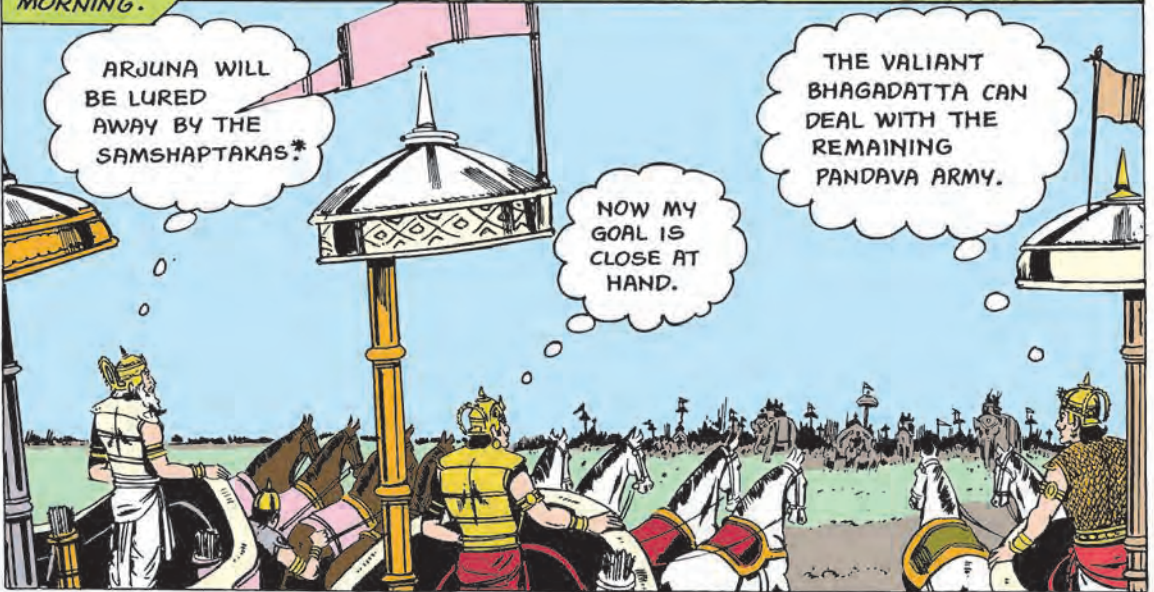
GIVE US THIS ASSIGNMENT, O KING. ARJUNA HAS TIME AND AGAIN INSULTED US AND WE ARE BURNING WITH THE DESIRE FOR REVENGE. WE WANT TO KILL HIM.

"THE KAURAVA WARRIORS EVOLVED A STRATEGY FOR THE NEXT DAY'S WAR.





"THE KAURAVAS NOW BROUGHT THE PREVIOUS NIGHT'S PLAN INTO OPERATION THE NEXT MORNING.

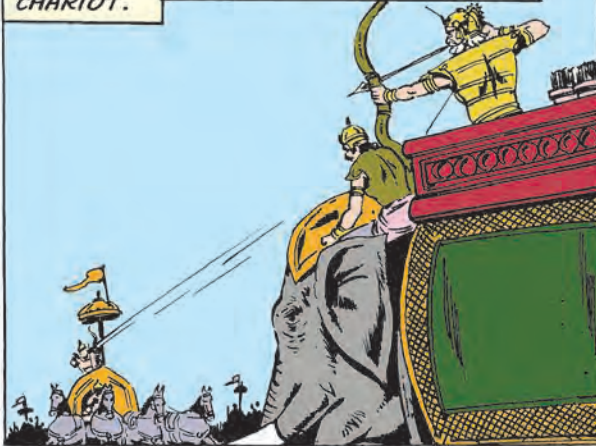


ARJUNA WILL  
BE LURED  
AWAY BY THE  
SAMSHAPTAKAS\*

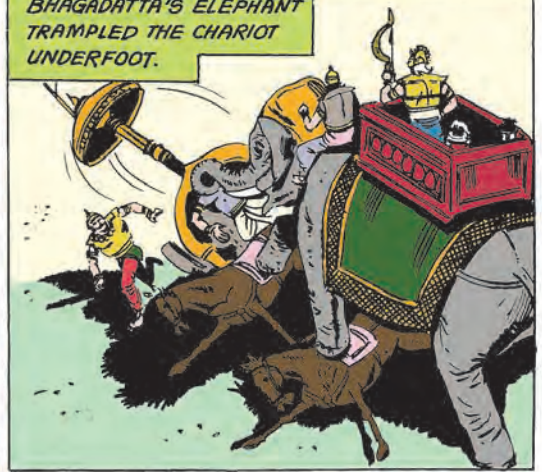
NOW MY  
GOAL IS  
CLOSE AT  
HAND.

THE VALIANT  
BHAGADATTA CAN  
DEAL WITH THE  
REMAINING  
PANDAVA ARMY.

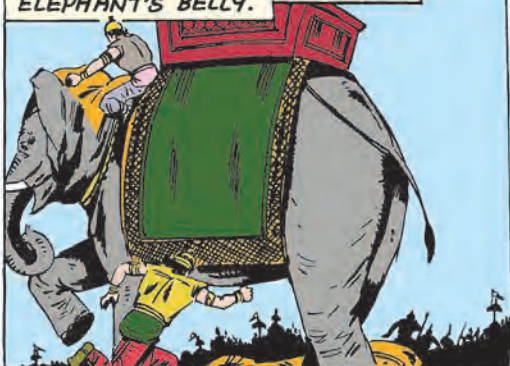
"BHAGADATTA ATTACKED BHEEMA IN HIS  
CHARIOT.



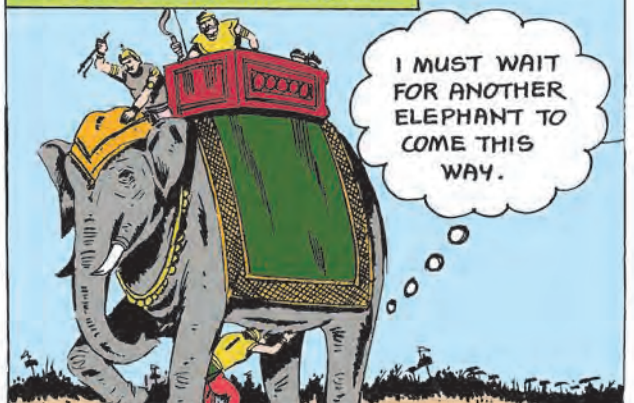
BHAGADATTA'S ELEPHANT  
TRAMPLED THE CHARIOT  
UNDERFOOT.



"BUT BHEEMA KNEW HOW TO BRING A  
RAGING ELEPHANT UNDER CONTROL.  
HE QUICKLY DUCKED UNDER THE  
ELEPHANT'S BELLY.



"AS HE STROKED THE ELEPHANT ON THE BELLY,  
THE BEAST QUIETENED DOWN.

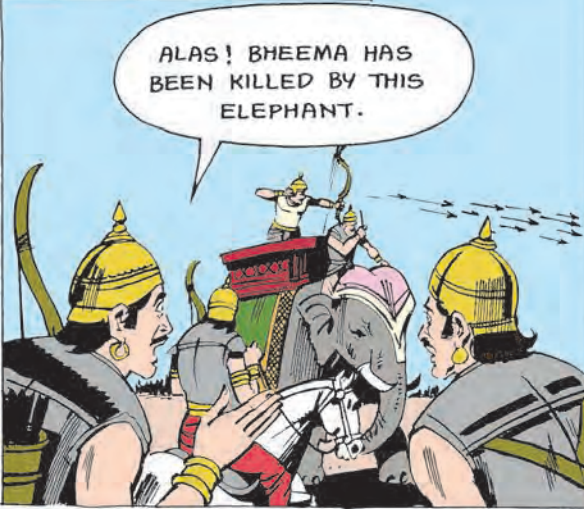


I MUST WAIT  
FOR ANOTHER  
ELEPHANT TO  
COME THIS  
WAY.

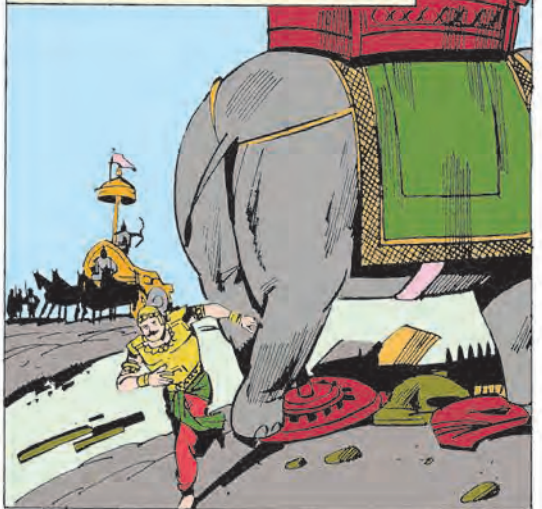
\* MERCENARIES WHO HAVE VOWED TO FIGHT THE BATTLE TO DEATH.



"UNABLE TO SEE BHEEMA ANYWHERE, THE PANDAVA ARMY PANICKED."



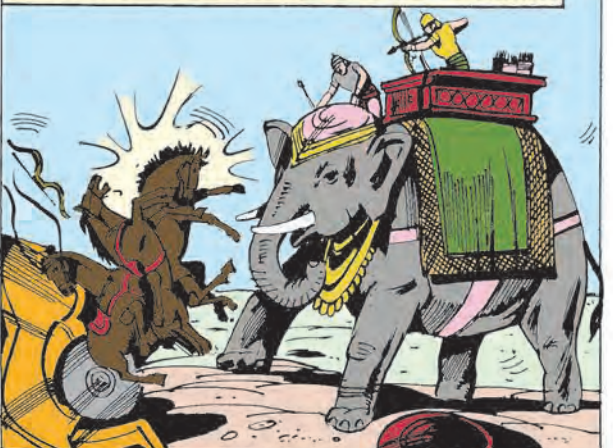
"BHEEMA THEN ESCAPED QUIETLY FROM UNDERNEATH THE ELEPHANT."



"YUDHISHTHIRA AND HIS FORCES ATTACKED BHAGADATTA'S ELEPHANT, WHO WAS NOW ON THE RAMPAGE AGAIN AFTER BHEEMA'S ESCAPE."



"THE ELEPHANT GATHERED UP SATYAKI'S CHARIOT IN HIS TRUNK AND HURLED IT FAR."



"ARJUNA WAS ALARMED BY THE WILD FURY OF THE ELEPHANT."





"SUDDENLY A CALL AROSE FROM THE NORTHERN QUARTER.

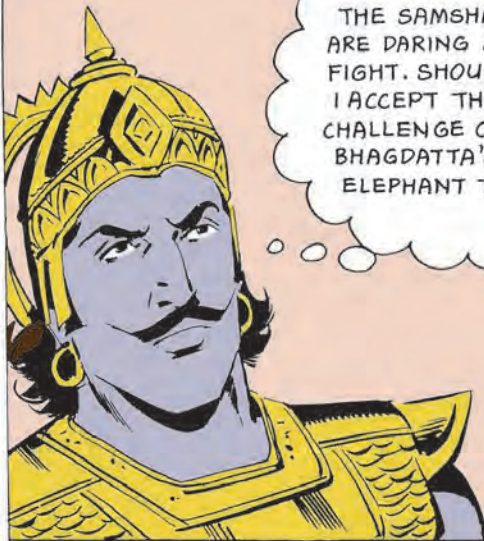
ARJUNA!  
ARJUNA!

COME  
HITHER!  
FIGHT  
WITH US!



"ARJUNA WAS NOW ON THE HORNS OF A DILEMMA.

THE SAMSHAPTAKAS  
ARE DARING ME TO  
FIGHT. SHOULD  
I ACCEPT THEIR  
CHALLENGE OR BRING  
BHAGDATTA'S  
ELEPHANT TO HEEL?



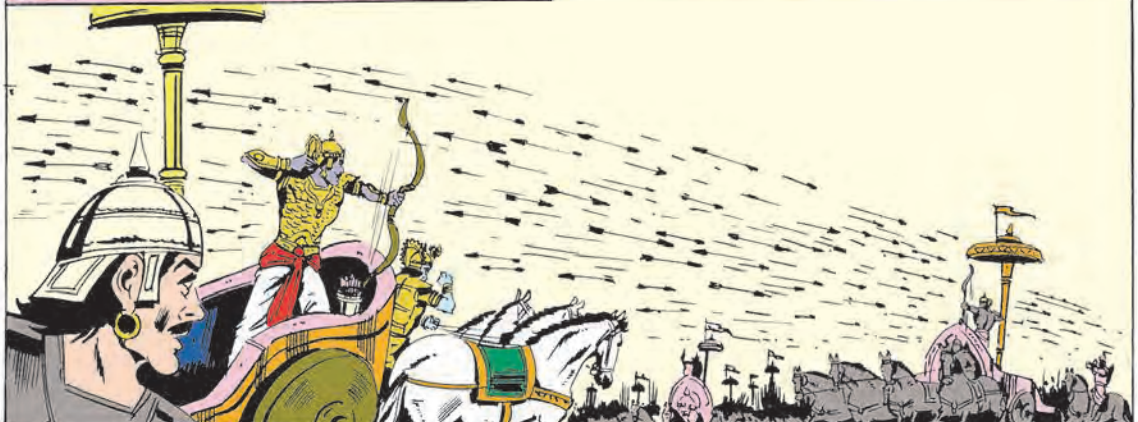
I CANNOT LET A  
CHALLENGE FOR  
BATTLE GO  
UNANSWERED.



"TURNING TO THE SAMSHAPTAKAS, ARJUNA LAUNCHED A MERCILESS ATTACK ON THEM.



"THE SAMSHAPTAKAS WERE WELL MATCHED AGAINST ARJUNA. THEY HARASSED HIM AND HIS CHARIOTEER KRISHNA GREATLY.





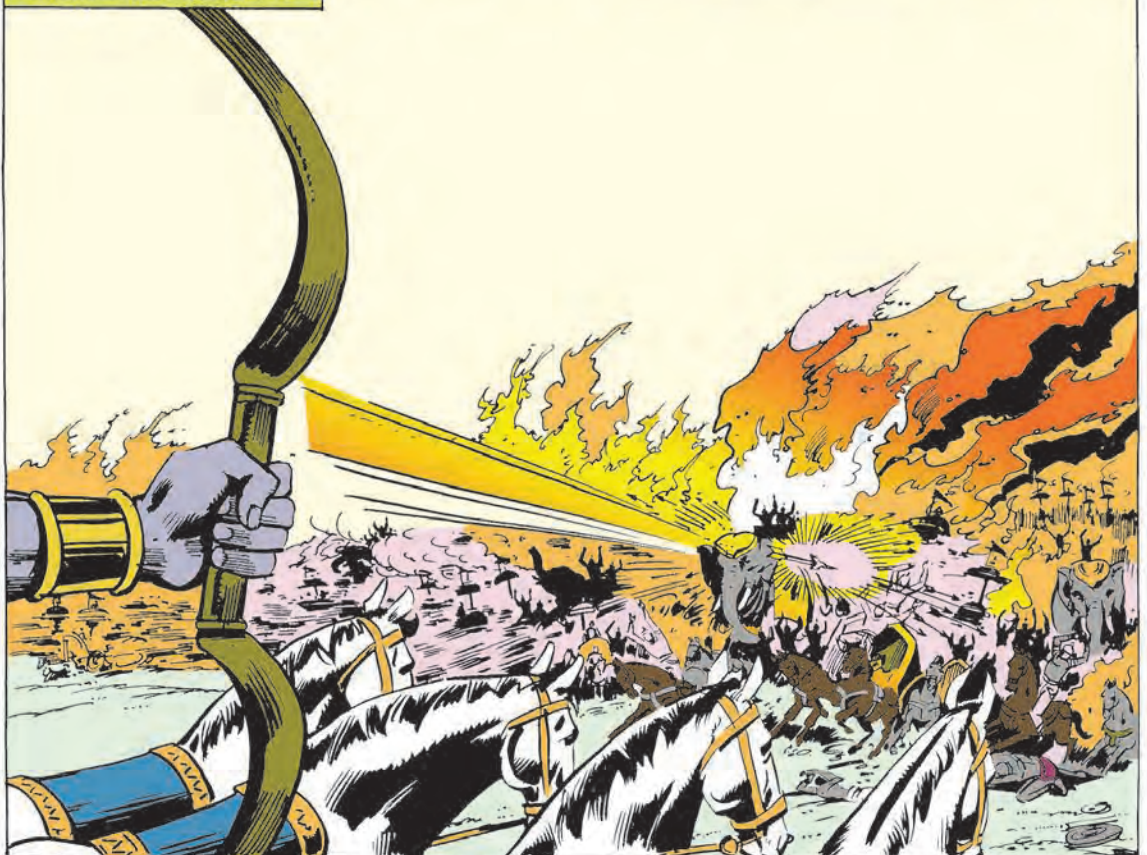
"SO THICK WAS THE AIR WITH THE ARROWS AND WEAPONS THAT KRISHNA LOST SIGHT OF ARJUNA."



"HEARING THIS, ARJUNA DREW OUT THE BRAHMASTRA ..."



"...AND RELEASED IT."





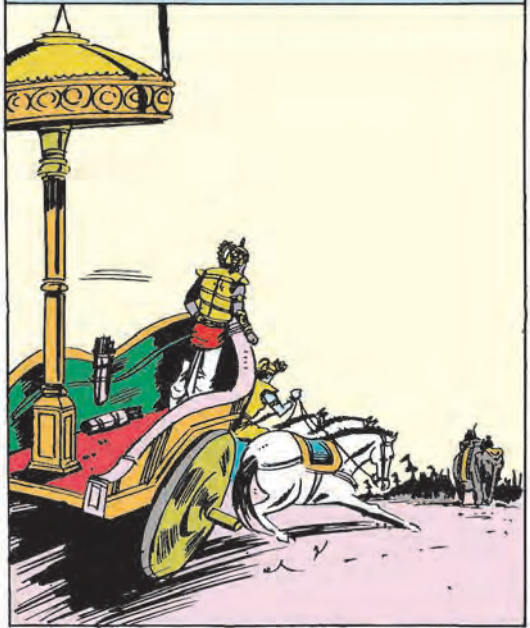
"PERCEIVING THE DESTRUCTIVE POWER OF ARJUNA, KRISHNA SAID.

VERY WELL DONE,  
O ARJUNA. YOU HAVE  
DESTROYED THOUSANDS  
OF SAMSHAPTAKAS  
WITH A SINGLE BLOW.

TAKE ME TO  
BHAGADATTA  
NOW.



"ARJUNA'S CHARIOT ADVANCED TOWARDS  
BHAGADATTA RIDING HIS ELEPHANT.

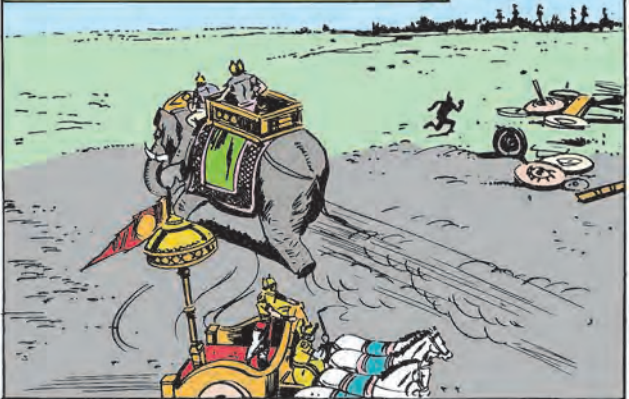


"AS THE ELEPHANT CHARGED AT  
ARJUNA MENACINGLY ...

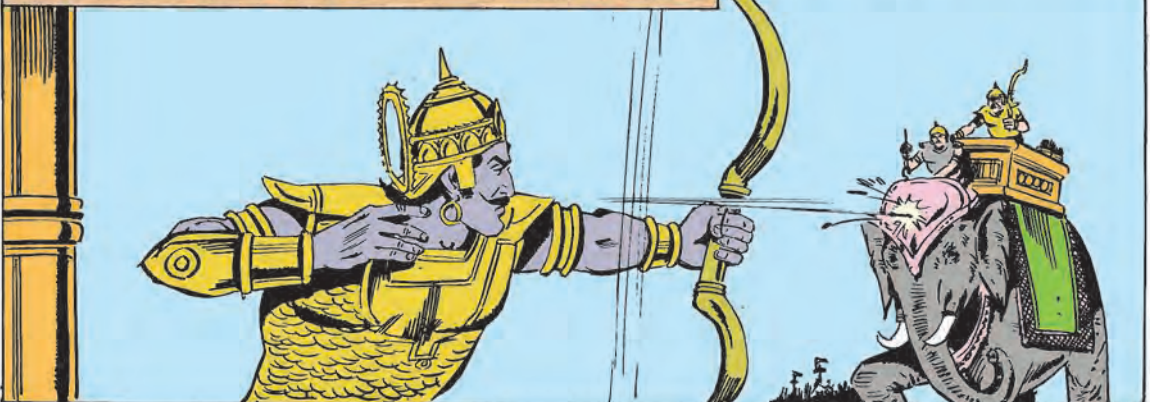
I WILL NOT  
KILL HIM.



"...KRISHNA SUDDENLY TURNED THE CHARIOT  
AWAY AND LET THE BEAST PASS\*"



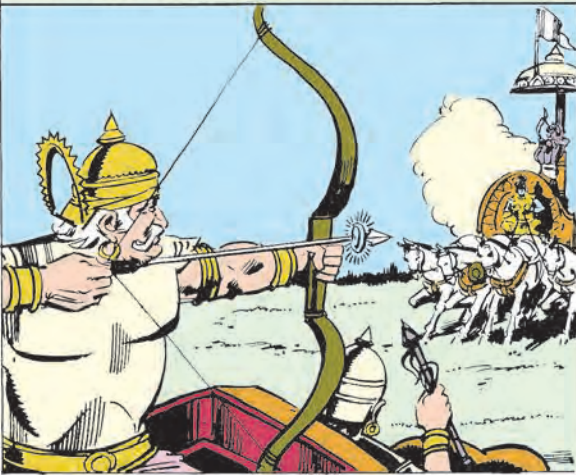
"THEN ARJUNA BLEW THE ELEPHANT'S ARMOUR TO PIECES.



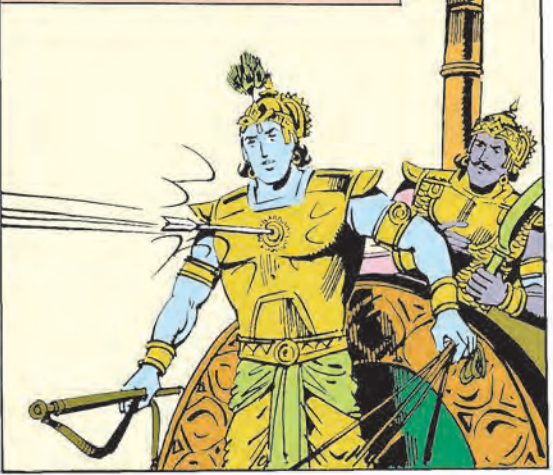
\* IT WAS AGAINST THE RULES OF WARFARE TO ATTACK SOMEBODY WITHOUT WARNING HIM



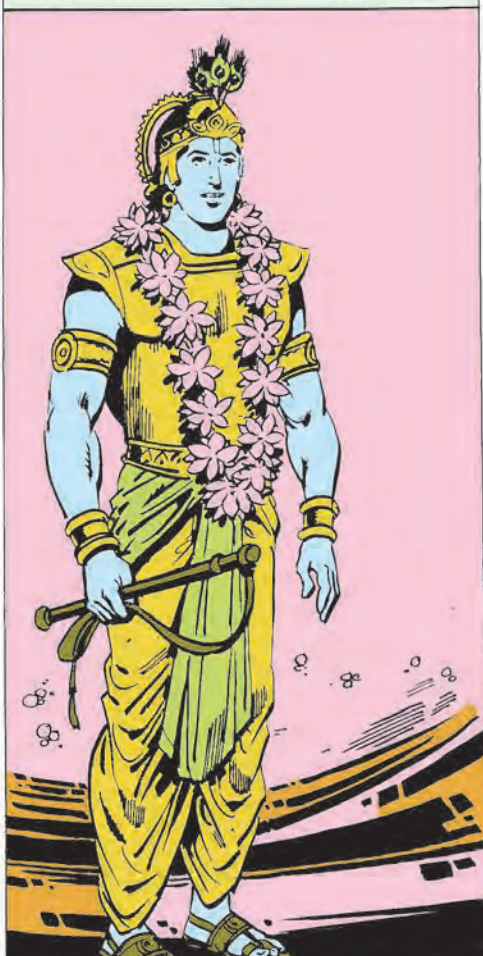
"TORTURED BY ARJUNA'S ARROWS BHAGADATTA NOW RELEASED THE POWERFUL VAISHNAVA WEAPON AGAINST ARJUNA."



"SHIELDING ARJUNA FROM THIS ALL-DESTROYING WEAPON, KRISHNA LET IT FALL ON HIS OWN CHEST."

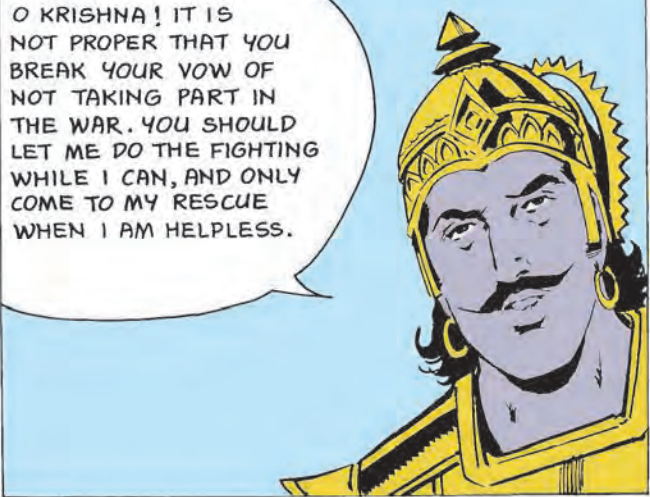


"AND LO! THE WEAPON CHANGED INTO A RESPLENDENT GARLAND, ADORNING THE LORD'S BOSOM."



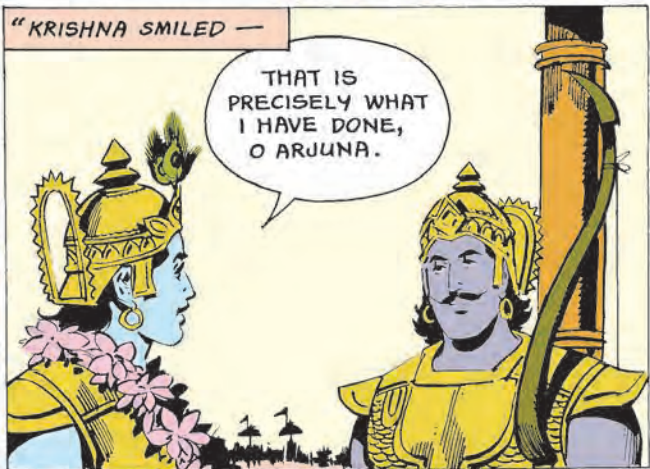
"BUT ARJUNA WAS PAINED TO SEE THIS."

O KRISHNA! IT IS NOT PROPER THAT YOU BREAK YOUR VOW OF NOT TAKING PART IN THE WAR. YOU SHOULD LET ME DO THE FIGHTING WHILE I CAN, AND ONLY COME TO MY RESCUE WHEN I AM HELPLESS.

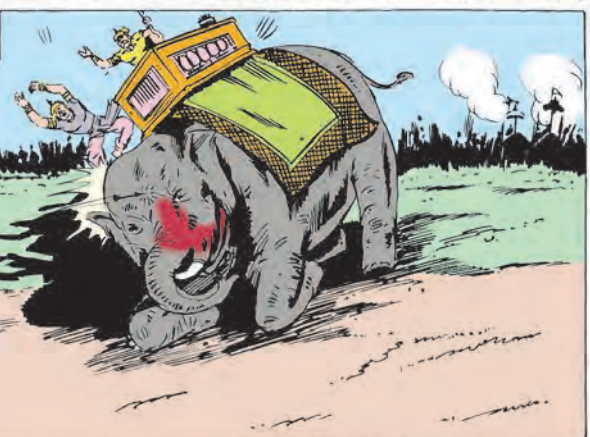
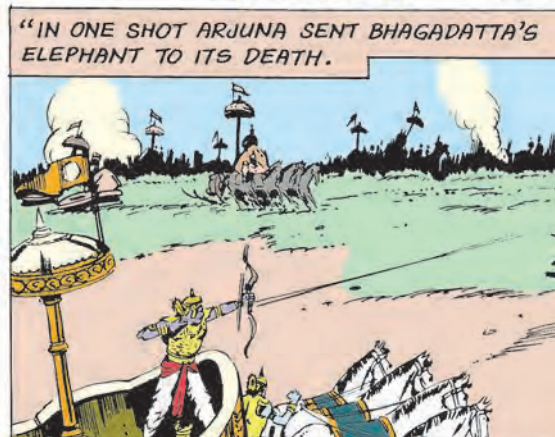
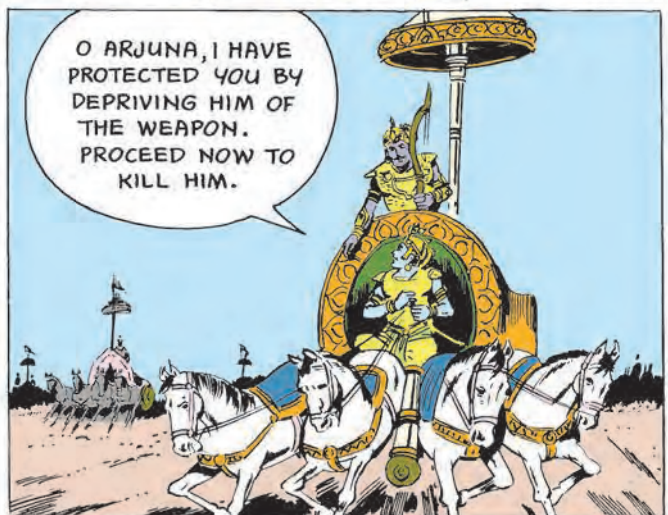
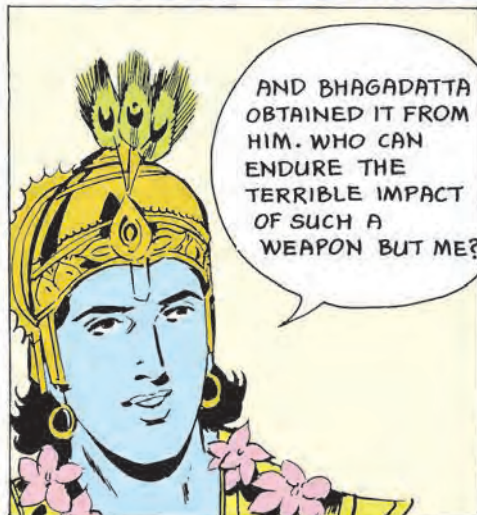
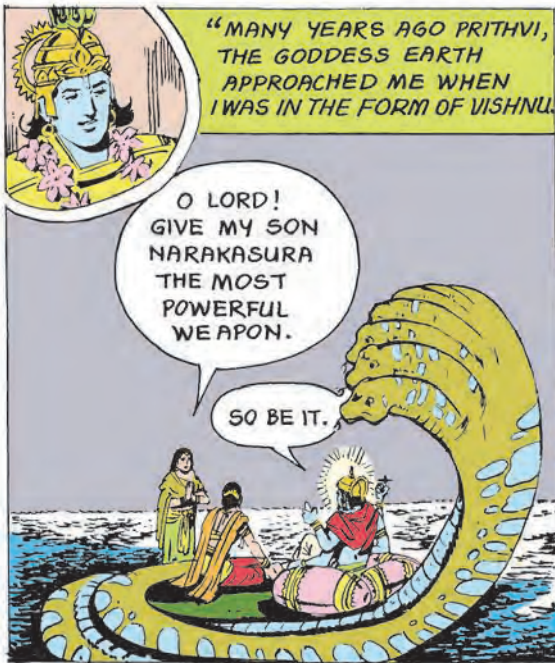


"KRISHNA SMILED —

THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT I HAVE DONE, O ARJUNA.



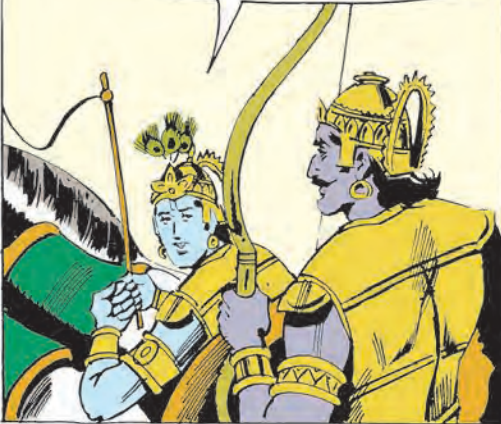




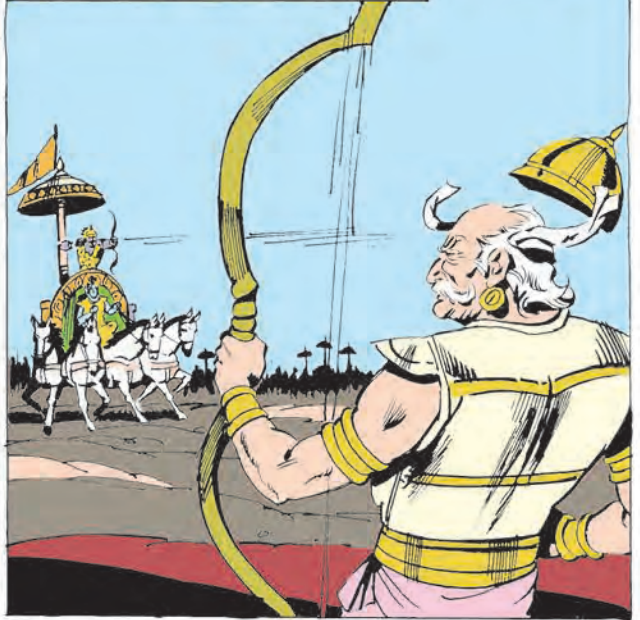


"AND THEN —

O ARJUNA ! LOOK CAREFULLY AT BHAGDATTA. HE IS A VERY OLD MAN BUT VERY VALOROUS. HIS EYELIDS ARE KEPT OPEN BY A PIECE OF CLOTH AROUND HIS FOREHEAD.



"ARJUNA'S NEXT AIMED HIS ARROW AT THE CLOTHBAND AND TORE IT AWAY.



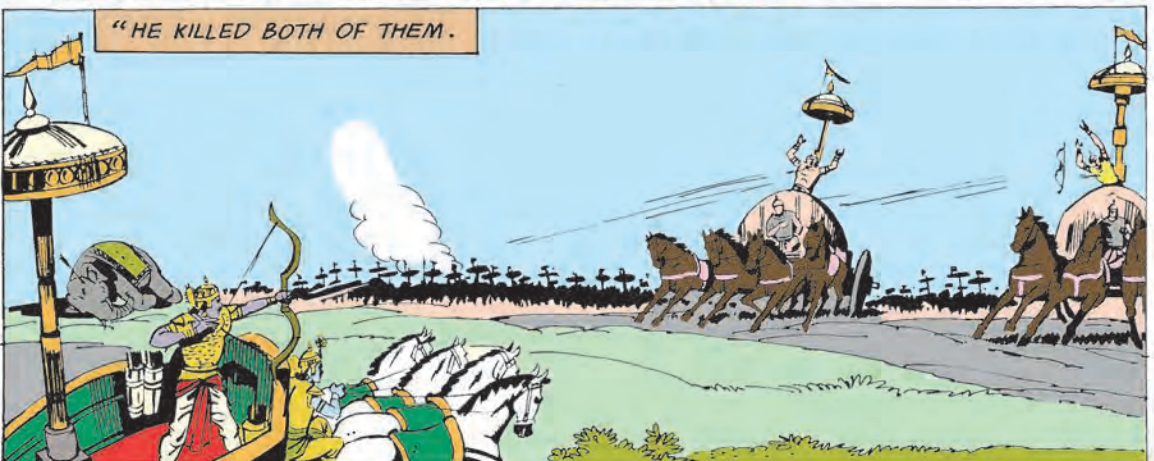
"WITH ANOTHER ARROW HE PUT AN END TO THE LIFE OF BHAGDATTA .



"ARJUNA THEN SWIFTLY TURNED TO CONFRONT THE TWO SONS OF SHAKUNI WHO WERE RAINING ARROWS ON HIM .



"HE KILLED BOTH OF THEM .





"THIS ENRAGED SHAKUNI WHO BROUGHT FORTH HIS ILLUSORY POWERS TO CONFOUND ARJUNA."



"FIERCE BEASTS ROSE TO THREATEN ARJUNA ON ALL SIDES."



"ARJUNA DESTROYED THEM AND DISPELLED THE DARKNESS BY THE WEAPON OF LIGHT.\*"



"SEEING THE ILLUSION DESTROYED, SHAKUNI FLED ON HIS SWIFT HORSE."





"TORMENTED BY ARJUNA'S FURY, THE KAURAVA FORCES RAN HELTER-SKELTER."



"IN THEIR EXTREME BEWILDERMENT AND FEAR, THEY EVEN ATTACKED EACH OTHER."



"THE FLEEING, HELPLESS KAURAVAS CALLED OUT —"

KARNA!  
O KARNA!

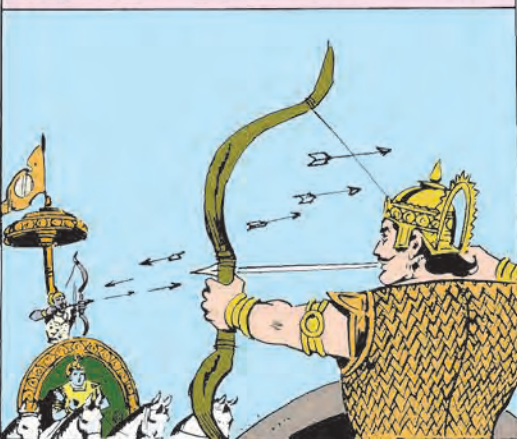
SAVE US,  
O KARNA!



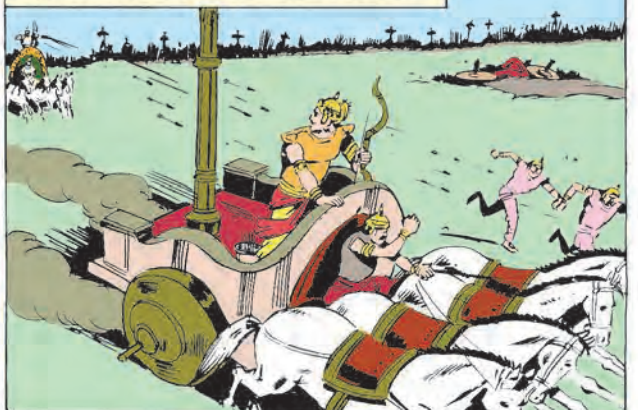
FEAR NOT, MY  
MEN, I'M HERE TO  
PROTECT YOU.



"KARNA DID TRY TO CONFRONT ARJUNA..."

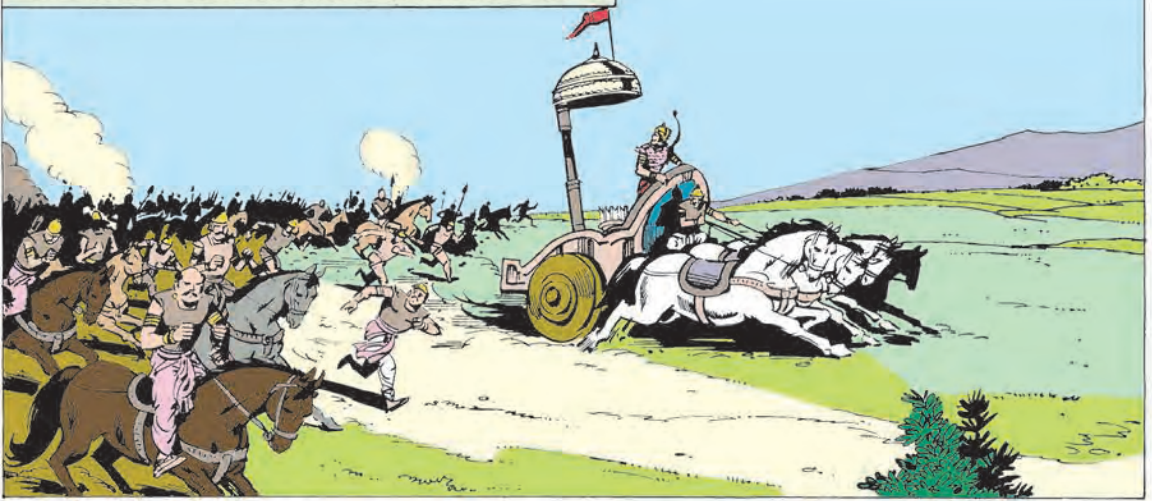


"... BUT COULD NOT BEAR ARJUNA'S WRATH FOR LONG AND FLED THE FIELD."





"THE FRIGHTENED KAURAVAS FOLLOWED SUIT."



"THE SETTING SUN SIGNALLED THE END OF THE HOSTILITIES FOR THE DAY, MUCH TO THE RELIEF OF BOTH ARMIES."

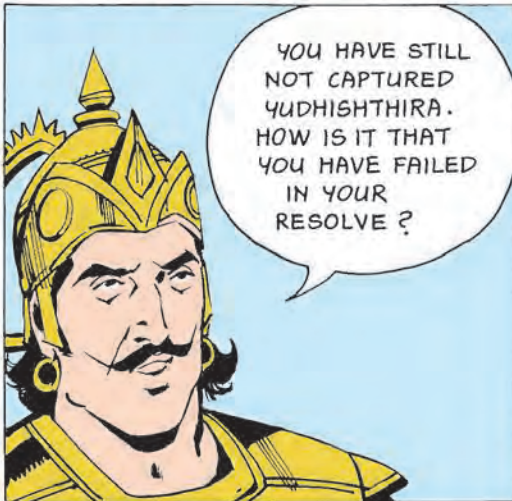


"DURYODHANA WAS DISHEARTENED SINCE HIS PLAN TO CAPTURE YUDHISHTHIRA HAD FAILED."

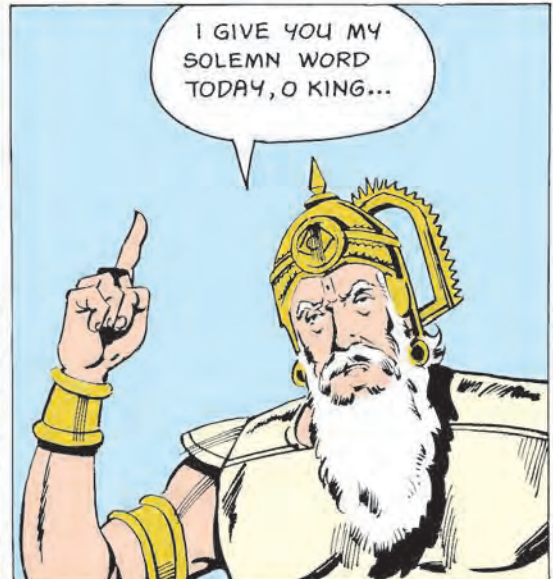




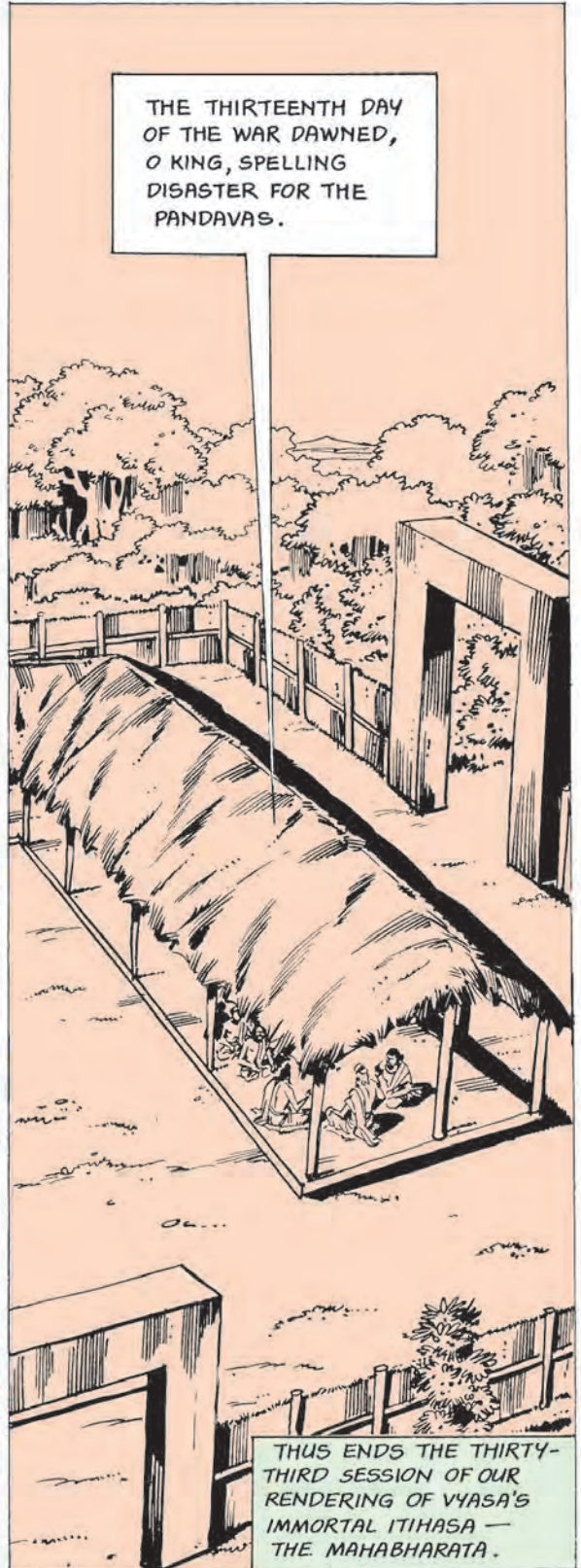
"THE NEXT MORNING, BEFORE THE WAR STARTED, DURYODHANA APPROACHED DRONA AND SAID —



"DRONA WAS HURT AND UNHAPPY.



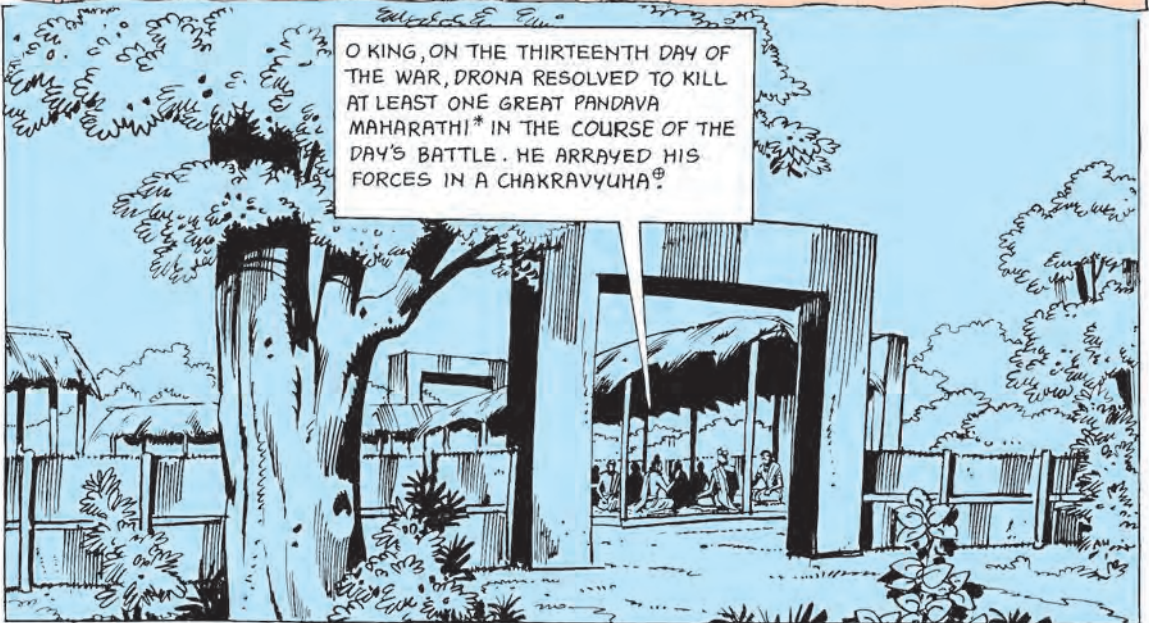




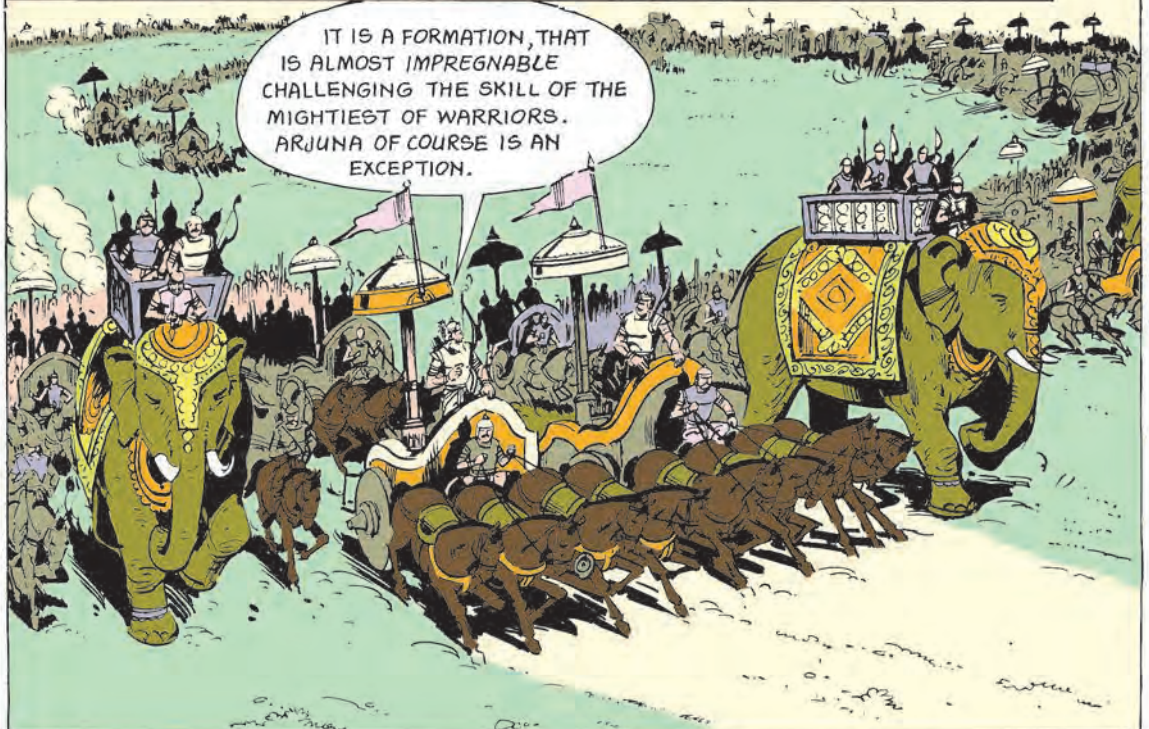


# Mahabharata - 34

## The Slaying Of Abhimanyu

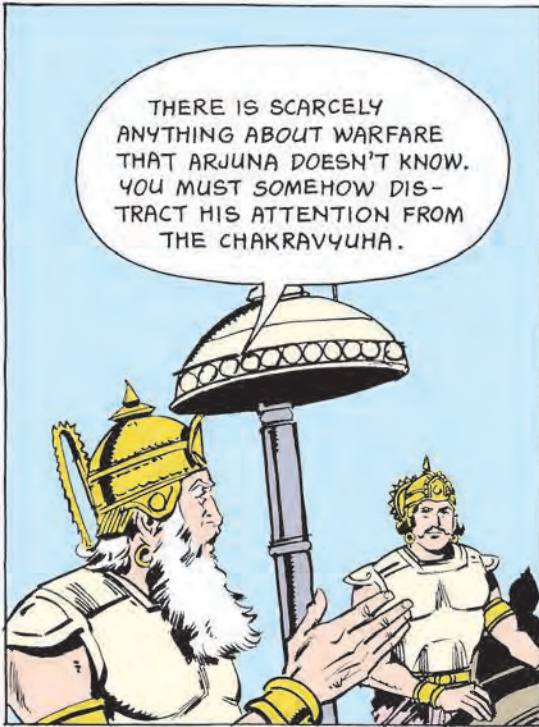


"JAYADRATHA STOOD FIRM LIKE MOUNT MERU BESIDE DRONA AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE CHAKRAVYUHA. BEHIND HIM WERE ASHWATTHAMA AND OTHER WARRIORS."

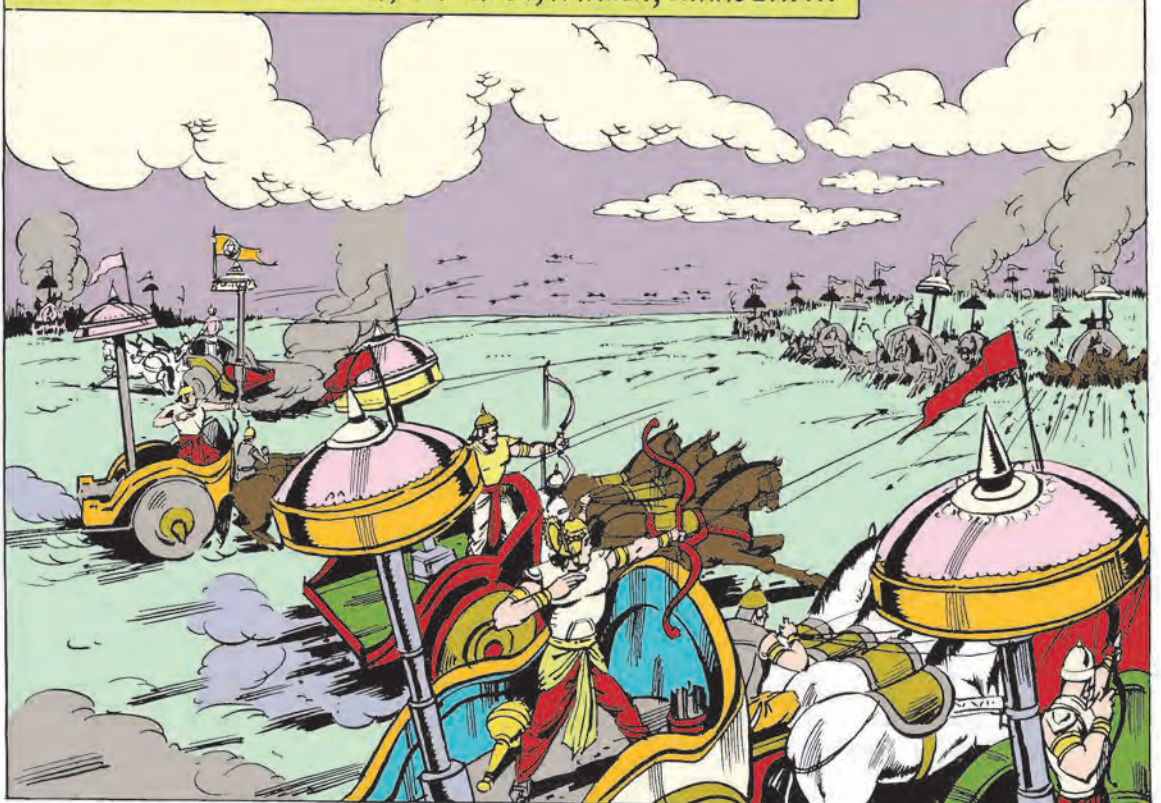


\* THE HIGHEST HONOUR BESTOWED ON A WARRIOR. ® WHEEL FORMATION.





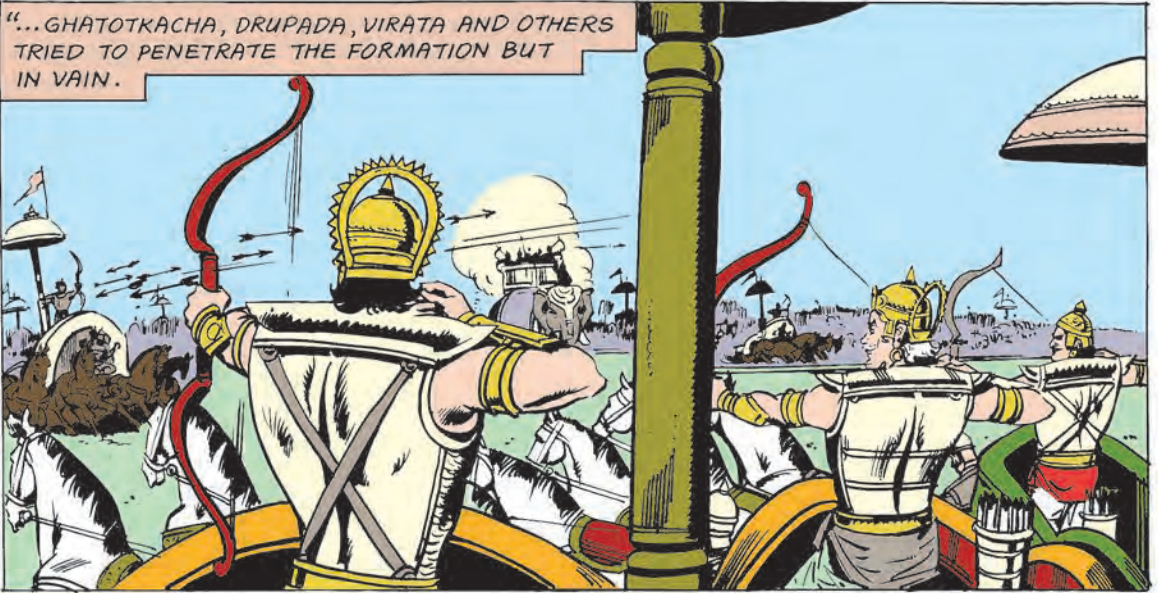
"ARJUNA RESPONDED TO THEIR CHALLENGE AGAIN, LEAVING THE PANDAVA ARMY TO STRUGGLE AGAINST DRONA'S DIFFICULT CHAKRA FORMATION. ALL THE GREAT PANDAVA WARRIORS DHRISTRADYUMNA, SHIKHANDI, NAKULA, SAHADEVA...



\* MERCENARIES WHO VOW NOT TO LEAVE THE BATTLEFIELD, WITHOUT WINNING.



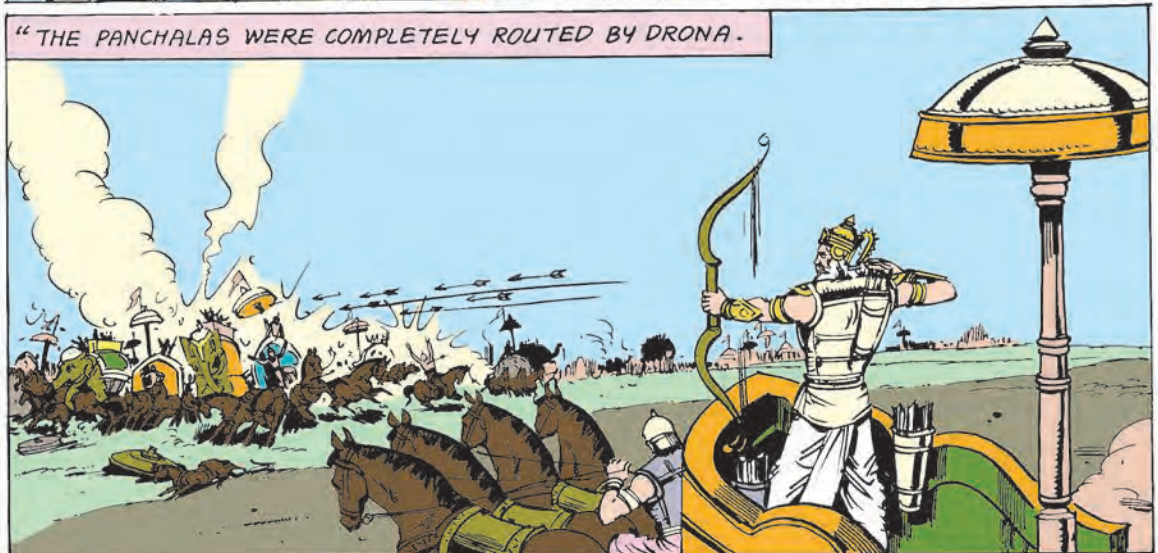
"...GHATOTKACHA, DRUPADA, VIRATA AND OTHERS  
TRIED TO PENETRATE THE FORMATION BUT  
IN VAIN.



"A SHOWER OF ARROWS FROM DRONA  
HELD THEM IN CHECK.



"THE PANCHALAS WERE COMPLETELY ROUTED BY DRONA.





"YUDHISHTHIRA WAS EXASPERATED."

IS THERE NONE IN OUR ARMY WHO CAN FACE DRONA'S WRATH?

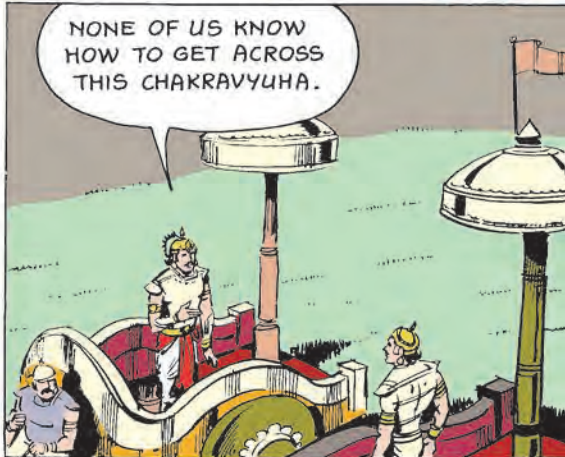


"HE TURNED TO ABHIMANYU, THE YOUNG SON OF ARJUNA —

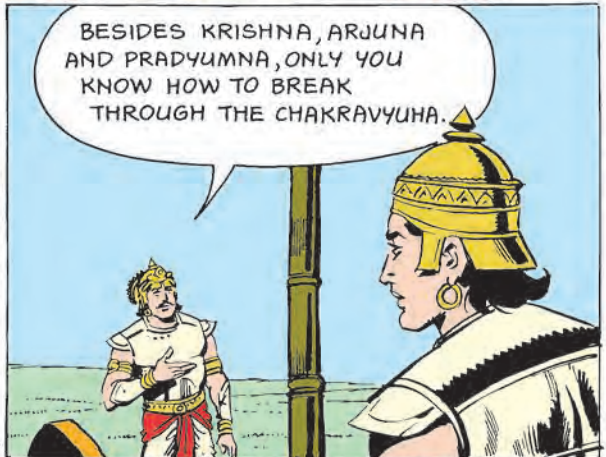
DO SOMETHING TO SAVE US THE EMBARRASSMENT WHEN ARJUNA RETURNS FROM FIGHTING THE SAMSHAPATAKAS.



NONE OF US KNOW HOW TO GET ACROSS THIS CHAKRAVYUHA.



BESIDES KRISHNA, ARJUNA AND PRADYUMNA, ONLY YOU KNOW HOW TO BREAK THROUGH THE CHAKRAVYUHA.



ABHIMANYU, USE YOUR VALOUR AND SKILL AT THIS CRUCIAL HOUR AND DESTROY DRONA'S FORCES!

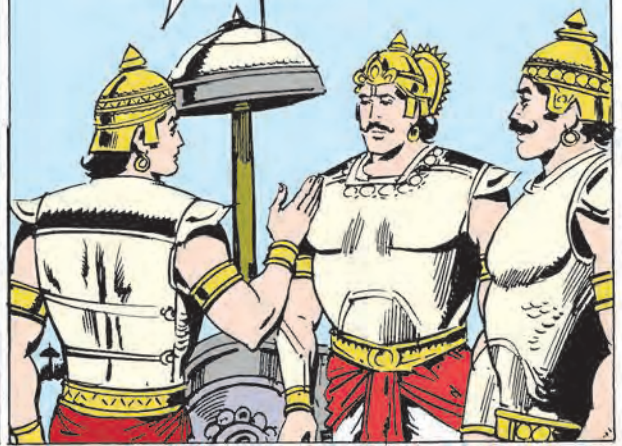




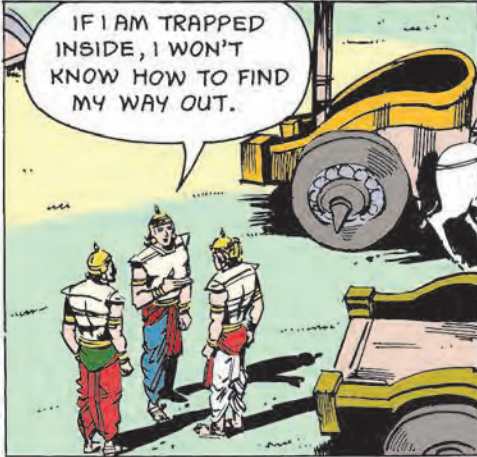
"ABHIMANYU REPLIED —



...I KNOW ONLY HOW  
TO PENETRATE THE  
CHAKRAVYUHA.



IF I AM TRAPPED  
INSIDE, I WON'T  
KNOW HOW TO FIND  
MY WAY OUT.

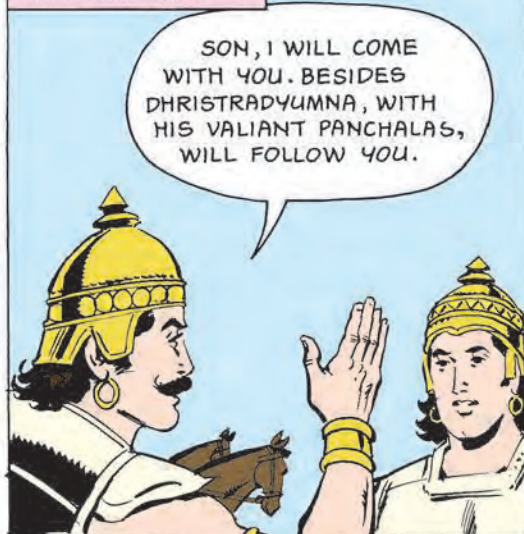


O ABHIMANYU! MAKE AN INROAD  
INTO THIS IMPENETRABLE FOR-  
MATION. WE WILL ALL FOLLOW  
YOU INSIDE AND PROTECT  
YOU THEREAFTER.

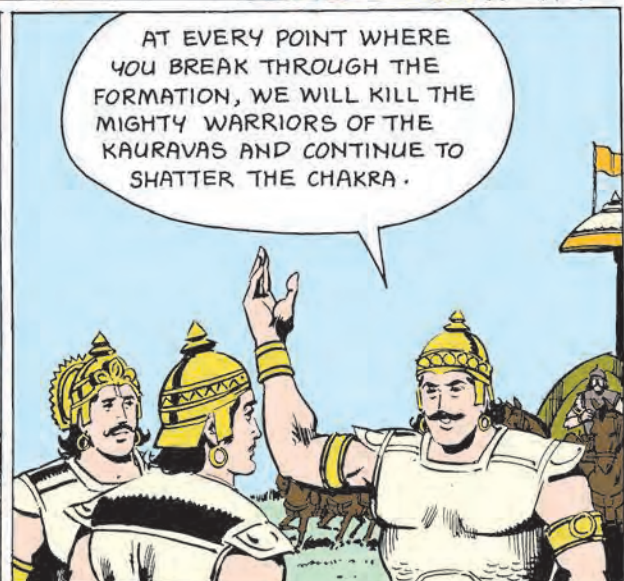


"BHEEMA SAID —

SON, I WILL COME  
WITH YOU. BESIDES  
DHRISTRADYUMNA, WITH  
HIS VALIANT PANCHALAS,  
WILL FOLLOW YOU.



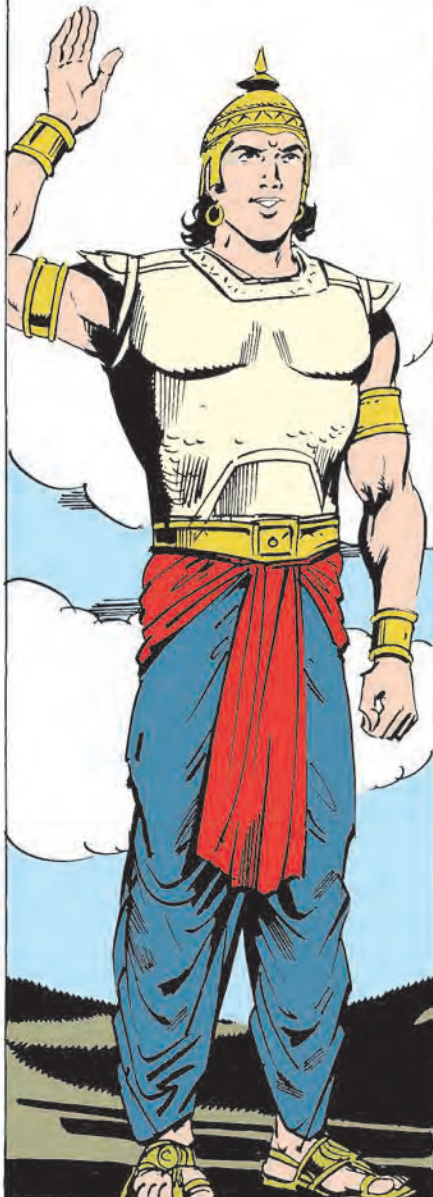
AT EVERY POINT WHERE  
YOU BREAK THROUGH THE  
FORMATION, WE WILL KILL THE  
MIGHTY WARRIORS OF THE  
KAURAVAS AND CONTINUE TO  
SHATTER THE CHAKRA.





"THE VALOROUS ABHIMANYU  
DECLARED —

SUCH A FEAT  
WILL I PERFORM  
TODAY THAT MY  
PARENTS AND MY  
UNCLE KRISHNA  
WILL BE PROUD  
OF ME.

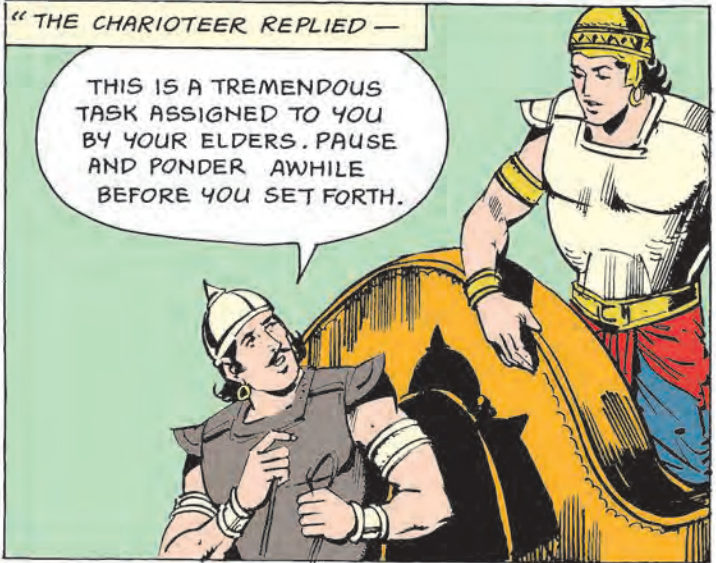


COME,  
CHARIOTEER,  
LEAD ME ON  
TO DRONA.



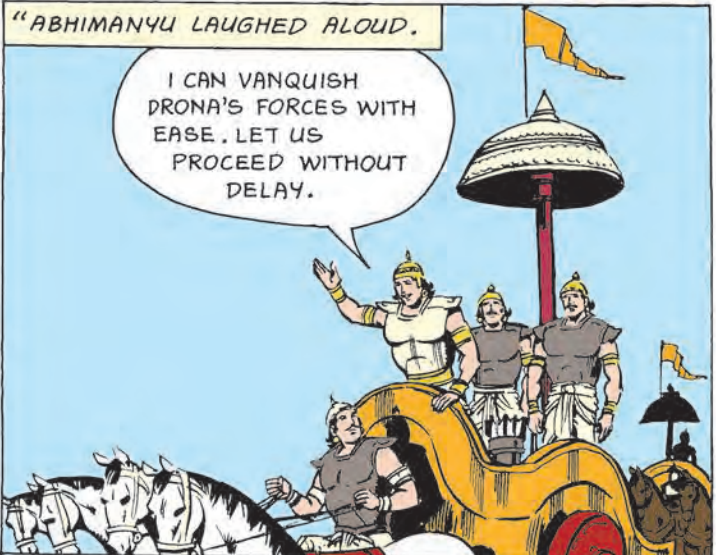
"THE CHARIOTEER REPLIED —

THIS IS A TREMENDOUS  
TASK ASSIGNED TO YOU  
BY YOUR ELDERS. PAUSE  
AND PONDER AWHILE  
BEFORE YOU SET FORTH.



"ABHIMANYU LAUGHED ALOUD.

I CAN VANQUISH  
DRONA'S FORCES WITH  
EASE. LET US  
PROCEED WITHOUT  
DELAY.





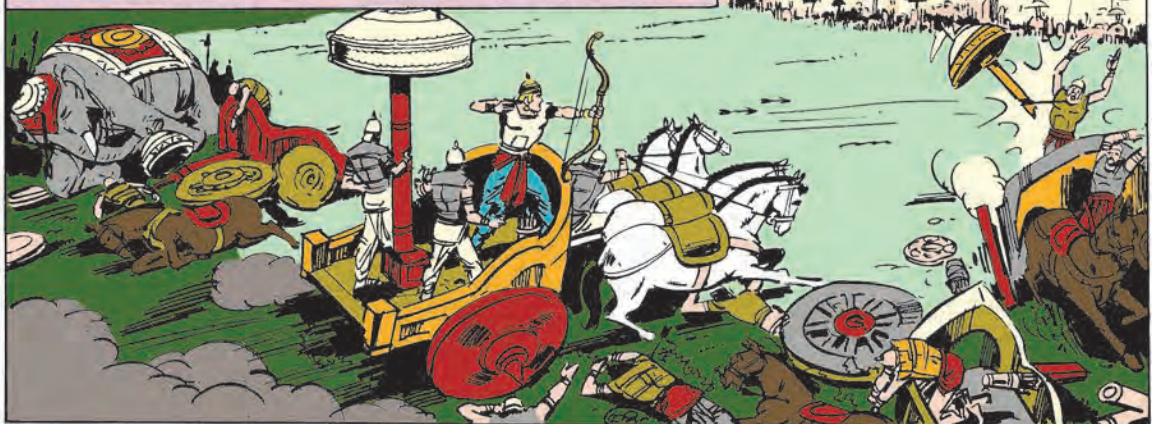
"ABHIMANYU CHARGED AGAINST THE KAURAVA ARMY WITH GREAT SPEED."



"HE FOUGHT WITH MATCHLESS VALOUR..."



"...AND EVENTUALLY PIERCED THROUGH THE FORMATION."





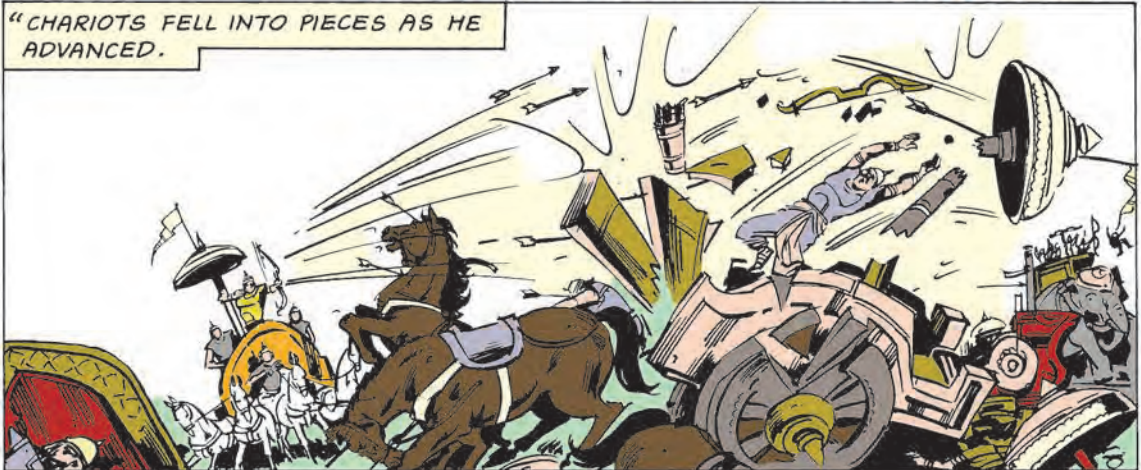
"HOWEVER, WITHIN MOMENTS, THE KAURAVA WARRIORS SURROUNDED HIM.



"IT WAS A FEARFUL BATTLE THAT ABHIMANYU FOUGHT SINGLE-HANDEDLY.



"CHARIOTS FELL INTO PIECES AS HE ADVANCED.



"THE FRIGHTENED KAURAVA ARMY SCATTERED PELL-MELL.



"UNABLE TO CONTAIN HIS ANGER, DURYODHANA CHARGED AHEAD AGAINST ABHIMANYU.





"DRONA ENTREATED THE FLEEING KAURAVAS —

HALT, O MIGHTY WARRIORS! PROTECT DURYODHANA FOR HIS VERY LIFE IS IN DANGER.

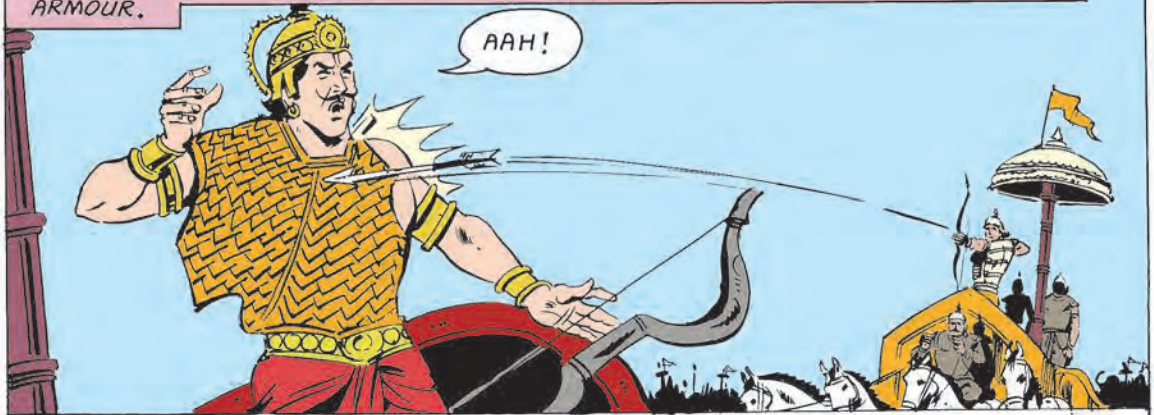


"EXHORTED BY DRONA, SOME OF THE MIGHTY WARRIORS RETURNED TO THE SCENE AND SURROUNDED DURYODHANA TO PROTECT HIM.

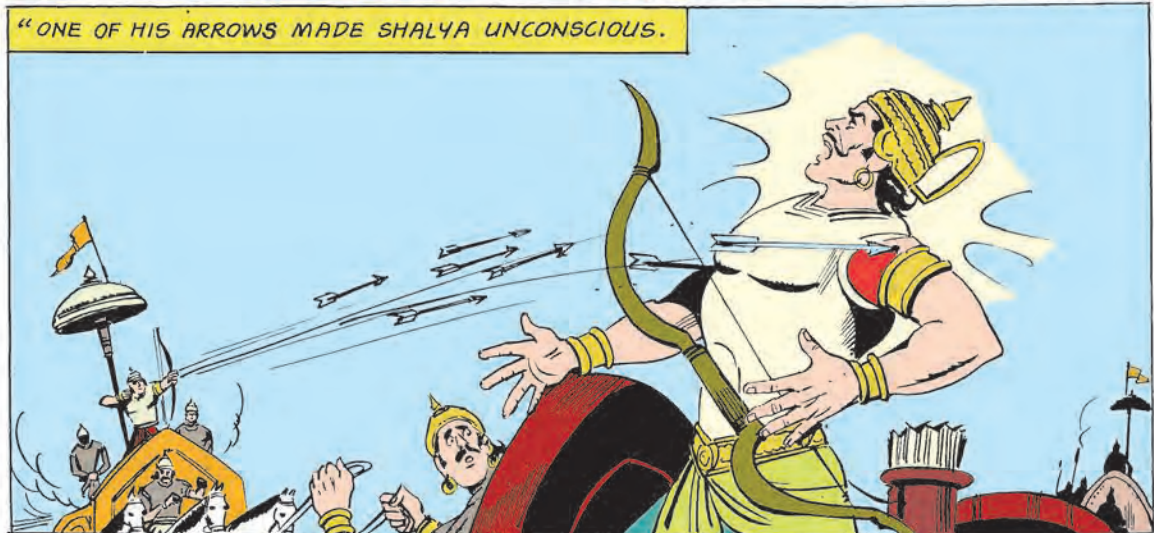


"DURING THE FIERCE BATTLE THAT ENSUED, ABHIMANYU SHATTERED KARNA'S ARMOUR.

AAH!



"ONE OF HIS ARROWS MADE SHALYA UNCONSCIOUS.





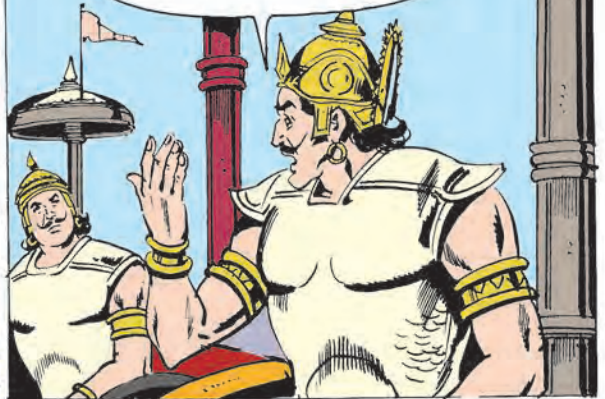
"EXCEEDINGLY PLEASED WITH ABHIMANYU'S VALOUR, DRONA SAID TO KRIPA —

THERE IS NONE AS VALIANT IN BATTLE AS YOUNG ABHIMANYU AND YET HE APPEARS TO BE FIGHTING WITH RESTRAIN-

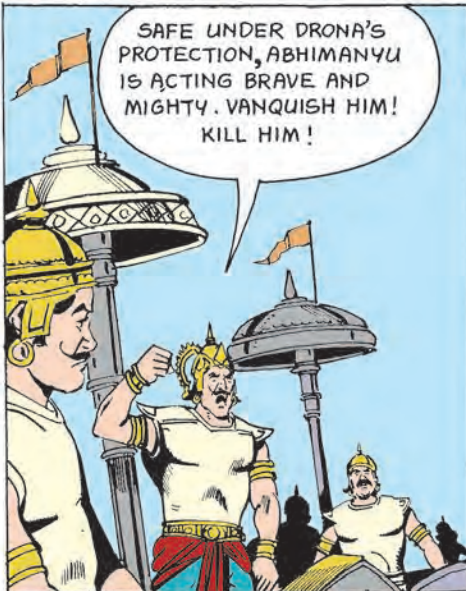


"THIS MADE DURYODHANA VERY ANGRY. HE DECLARED —

DRONA IS DELIBERATELY SPARING THE LIFE OF ABHIMANYU, SON OF HIS FAVOURITE PUPIL ARJUNA.

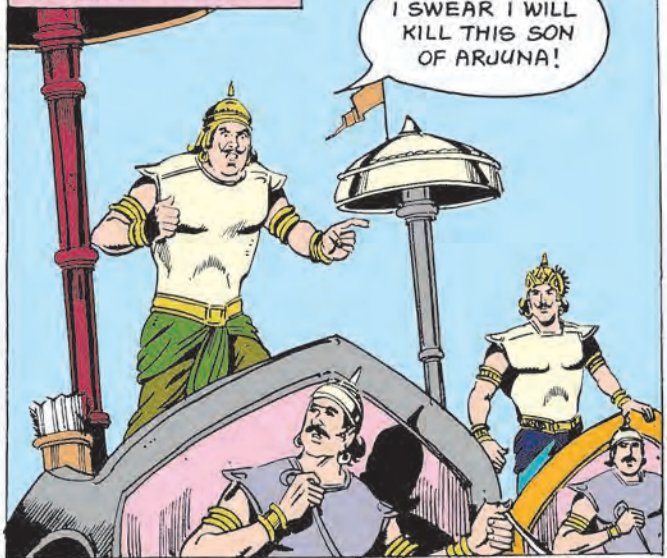


SAFE UNDER DRONA'S PROTECTION, ABHIMANYU IS ACTING BRAVE AND MIGHTY. VANQUISH HIM! KILL HIM!

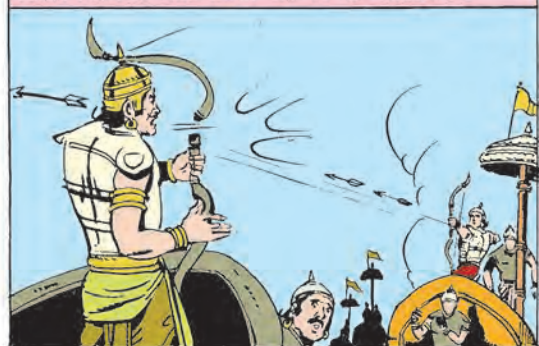


"DUHSHASANA SAID —

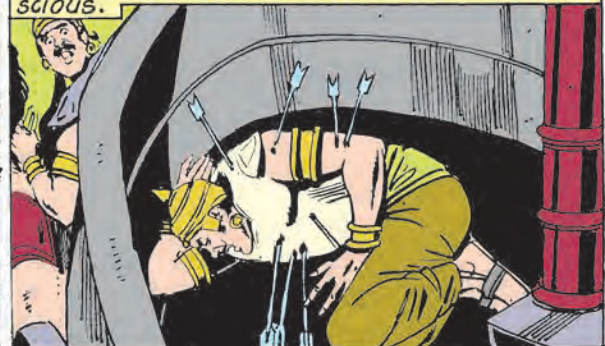
I SWEAR I WILL KILL THIS SON OF ARJUNA!



"AS DUHSHASANA APPROACHED, ABHIMANYU SHATTERED HIS BOW WITH AN ARROW.



"HE THEN SHOT ARROW AFTER DEADLY ARROW WHICH WOUNDED DUHSHASANA AND KNOCKED HIM UNCONSCIOUS.





"WHILE DUHSHASANA WAS BEING TAKEN AWAY FROM THE BATTLEFIELD..."



"... THE PANDAVA WARRIORS WERE STILL TRYING TO FOLLOW ABHIMANYU THROUGH THE GAP HE HAD MADE IN THE CHAKRAVYUHA."



"WITH SPEED, KARNA CHARGED AT ABHIMANYU."



"KARNA'S BROTHER TOO CAME UP BEHIND HIM TO SUPPORT HIM."

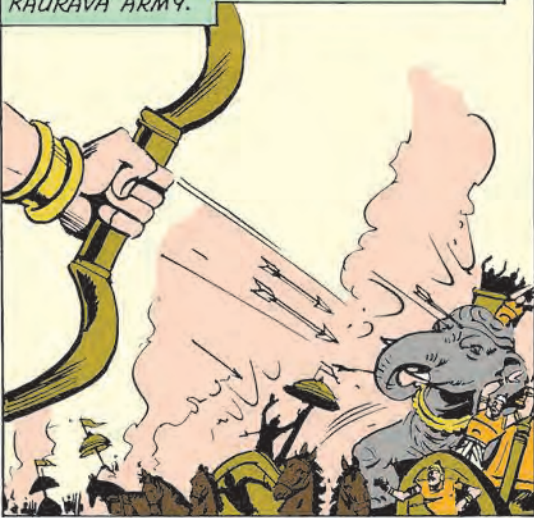


"BUT ABHIMANYU KILLED KARNA'S BROTHER AND KARNA FILLED WITH FEAR, FLED FROM THE SCENE."

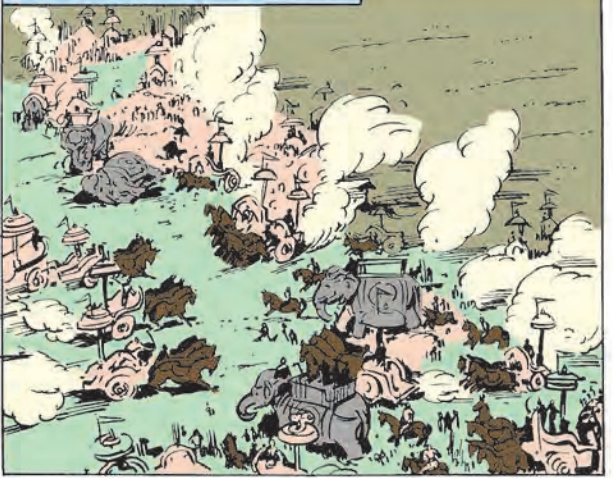




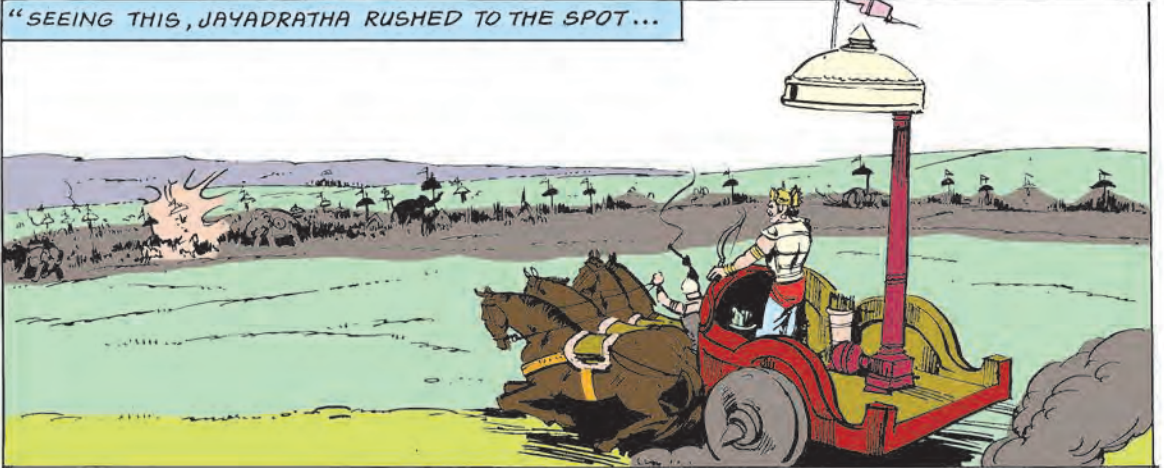
"ABHIMANYU GREATLY TORMENTED THE KAURAVA ARMY.



"MEANWHILE, THE OTHER PANDAVAS WERE TRYING TO BREAK INTO THE CHAKRAVYUHA IN A BID TO REACH ABHIMANYU.



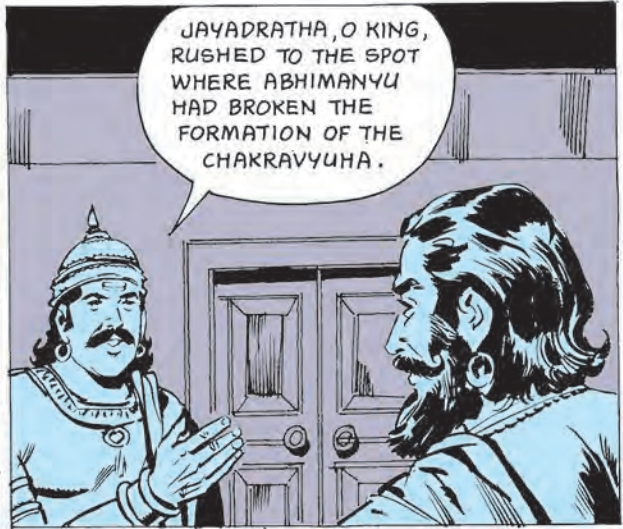
"SEEING THIS, JAYADRATHA RUSHED TO THE SPOT...



"... AND RESTRAINED THE PANDAVAS WHILE BRAVELY WITHSTANDING THEIR ONSLAUGHT.



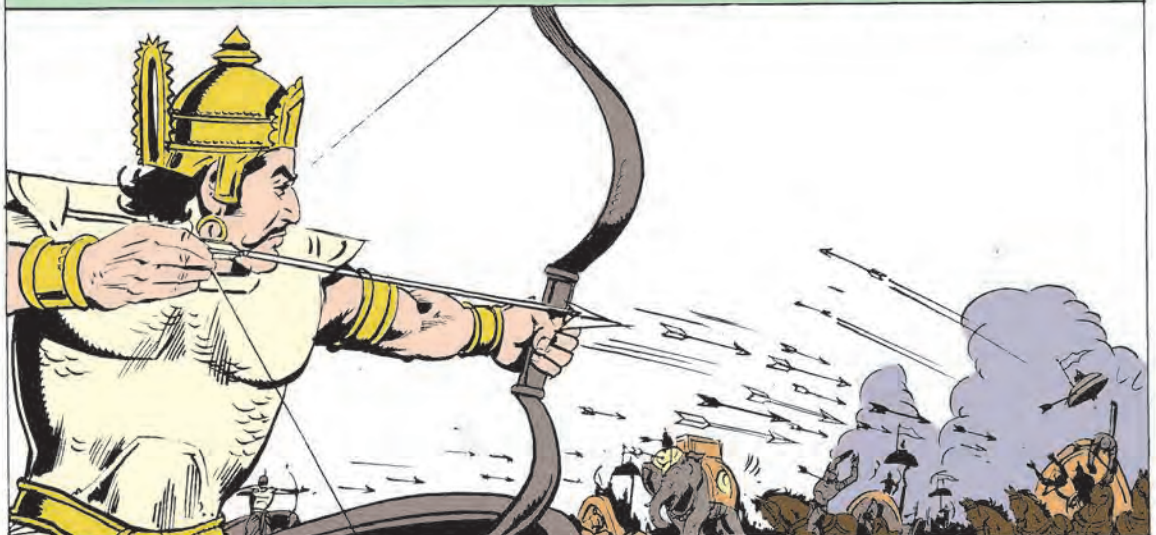




"HE WOUNDED BHEEMA, DHRISTADYUMNA, VIRATA,  
DRUPADA, SHIKHANDI AND YUDHISHTHIRA WITH AN  
INCESSANT FUSILLADE OF ARROWS .

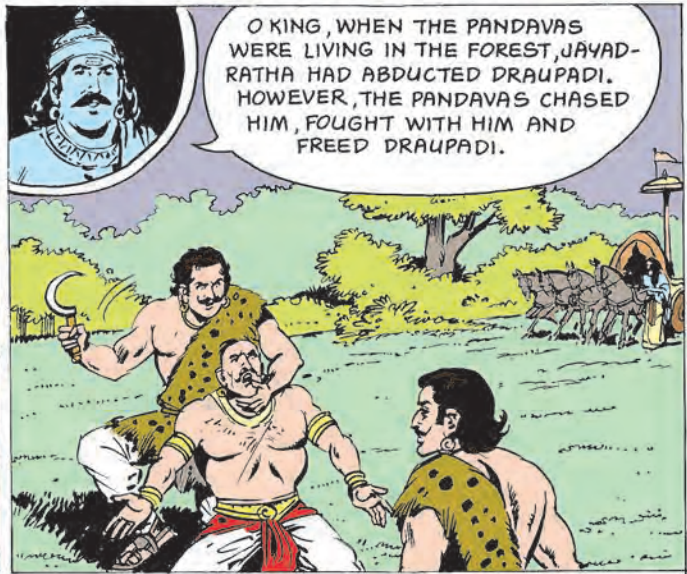


"AND THEN HE OBSTRUCTED THE PATH OF THE PANDAVA ARMY WITH A BARRAGE OF ARROWS .





"THE KAURAVAS HAILED JAYADRATHA'S VALOUR AND RUSHED TO HIS SUPPORT."

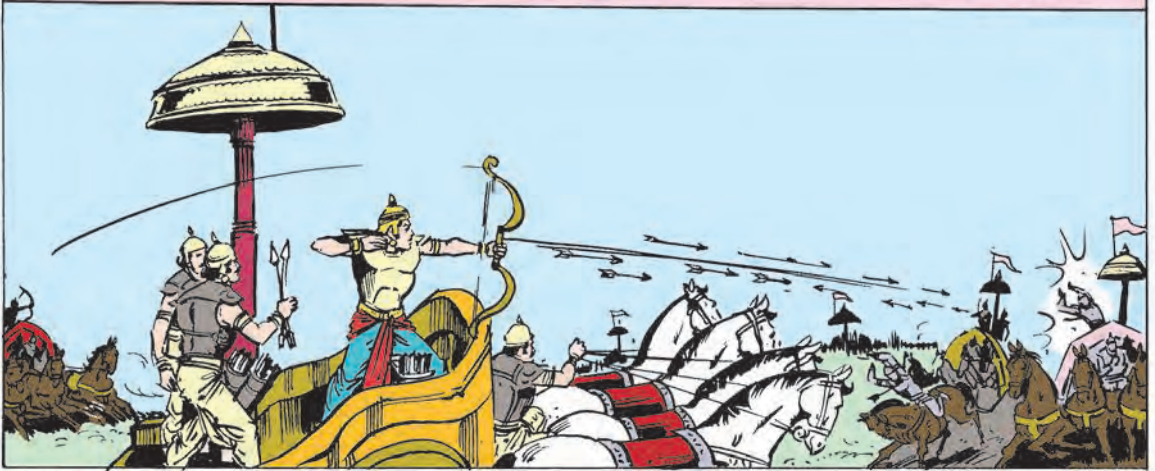


"A HUMILIATED JAYADRATHA THEN PERFORMED SEVERE AUSTERITIES. SHIVA THEN BLESSED HIM —





"MEANWHILE, ABHIMANYU THOUGH ISOLATED, BATTLED ON BRAVELY INSIDE THE CHAKRA."



"USING THE WEAPONS THAT ARJUNA HAD OBTAINED FROM THE GANDHARVAS, ABHIMANYU CREATED THE ILLUSION OF THOUSANDS OF ABHIMANYUS AROUND THE KAURAVAS."





## THE SLAYING OF ABHIMANYU

"WITH ONE SHARP ARROW, HE BEHEADED DURYODHANA'S SON LAKSHMANA."



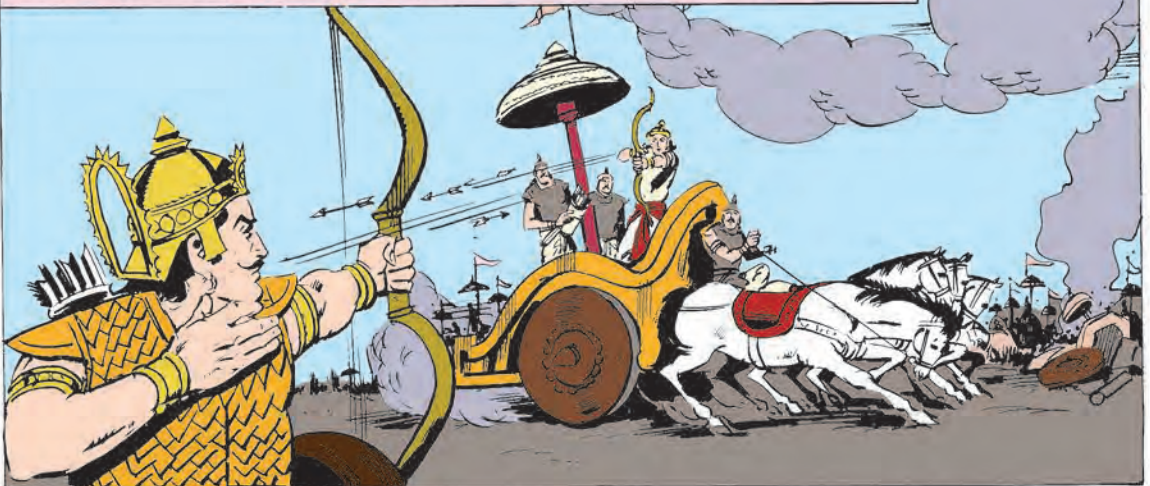
"SOON AFTER, ABHIMANYU WOUNDED DURYODHANA AND PUT HIM TO FLIGHT."



"WITH HIM FLED SIX MAHARATHIS AND THEIR FORCES IN MORTAL FEAR OF ABHIMANYU."

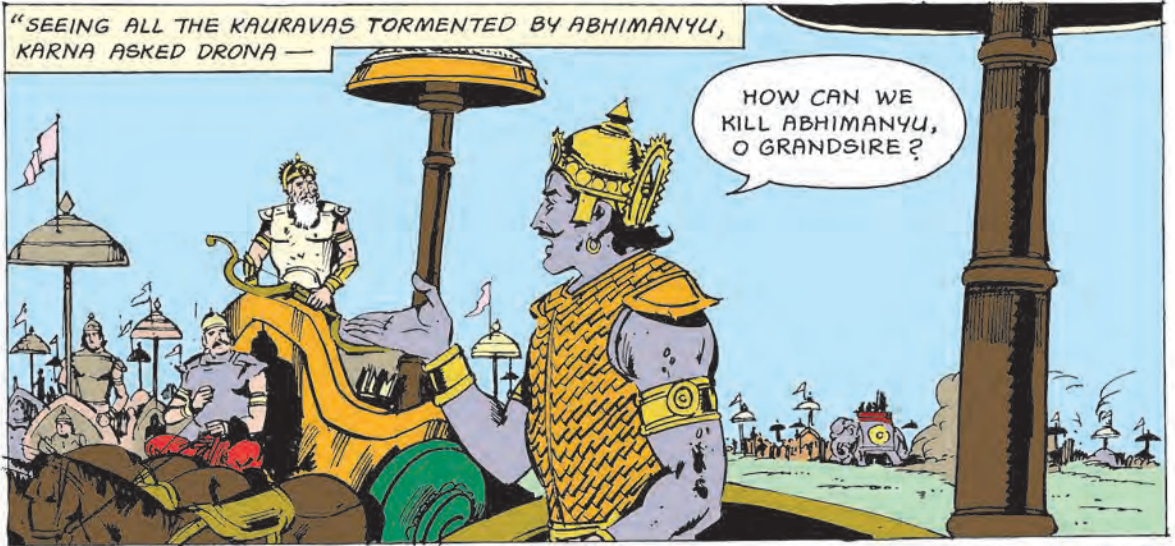


"KARNA THEN FOUGHT WITH ABHIMANYU. THEY WOUNDED EACH OTHER."





"SEEING ALL THE KAURAVAS TORMENTED BY ABHIMANYU,  
KARNA ASKED DRONA —



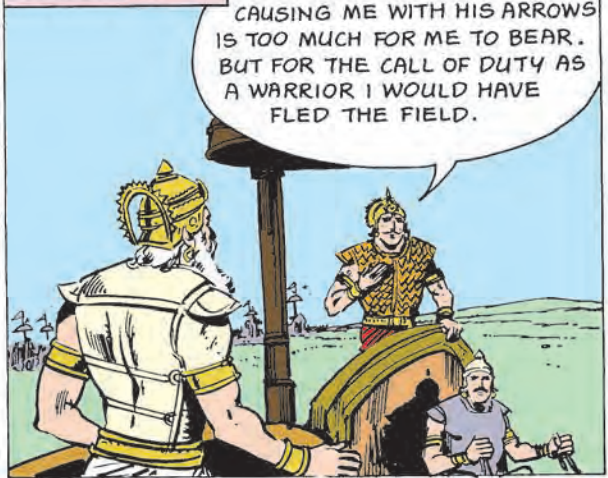
HOW CAN WE  
KILL ABHIMANYU,  
O GRANDSIRE?

"DRONA ANSWERED —



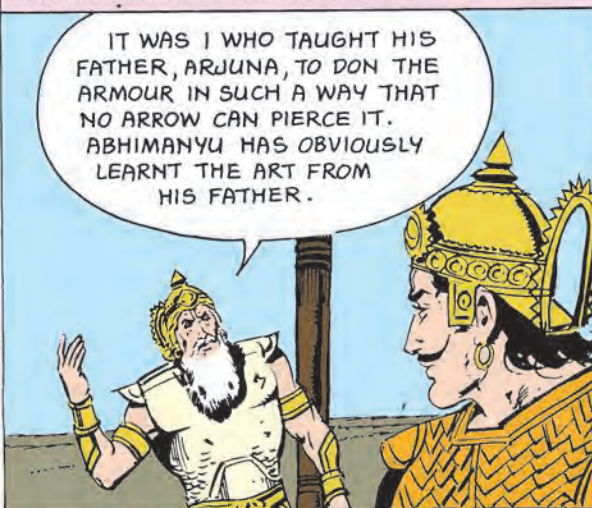
HURT AS  
I AM BY HIS  
ARROWS, I CAN  
NOT HELP BUT  
ADMIRE HIS  
SPEED AND  
SKILL.

"KARNA SAID —



OH! THE PAIN HE IS  
CAUSING ME WITH HIS ARROWS  
IS TOO MUCH FOR ME TO BEAR.  
BUT FOR THE CALL OF DUTY AS  
A WARRIOR I WOULD HAVE  
FLED THE FIELD.

"DRONA LAUGHED ALOUD AND SAID TO KARNA —



IT WAS I WHO TAUGHT HIS  
FATHER, ARJUNA, TO DON THE  
ARMOUR IN SUCH A WAY THAT  
NO ARROW CAN PIERCE IT.  
ABHIMANYU HAS OBVIOUSLY  
LEARNT THE ART FROM  
HIS FATHER.

HIS ARMOUR IS IMPENETRABLE.  
TRY, IF YOU CAN, TO CUT HIS  
BOW STRING FROM BEHIND,  
AND DESTROY HIS CHARIOT.

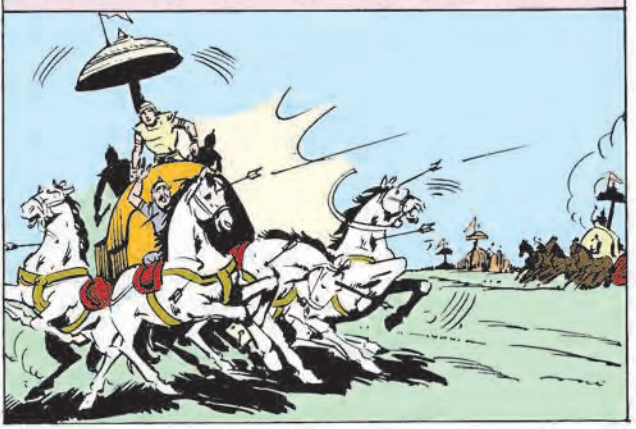




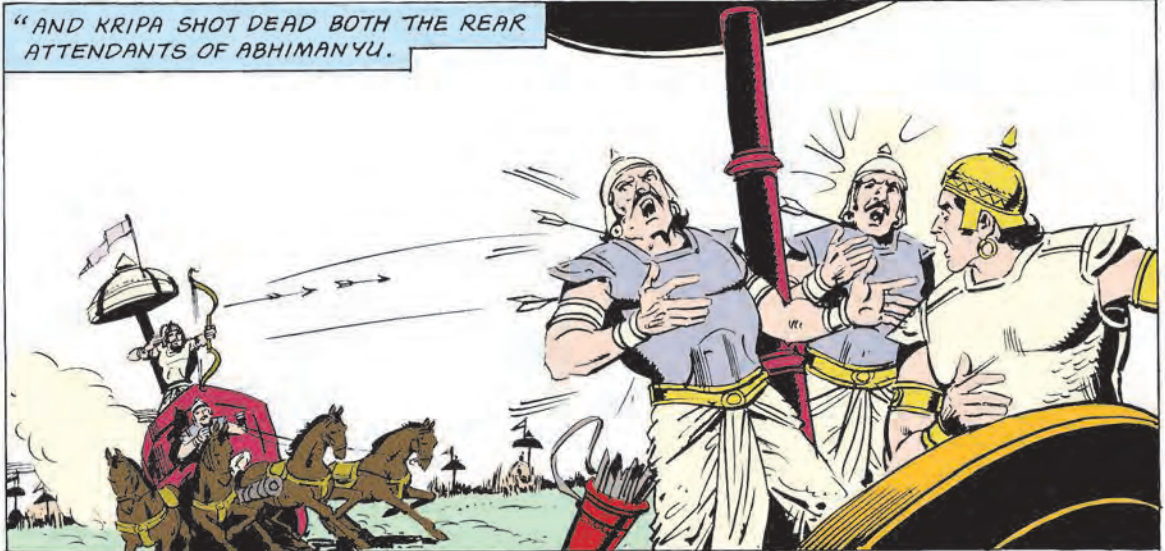
"EAGERLY FOLLOWING DRONA'S ADVICE, KARNA SHOT ABHIMANYU'S BOW TO PIECES."



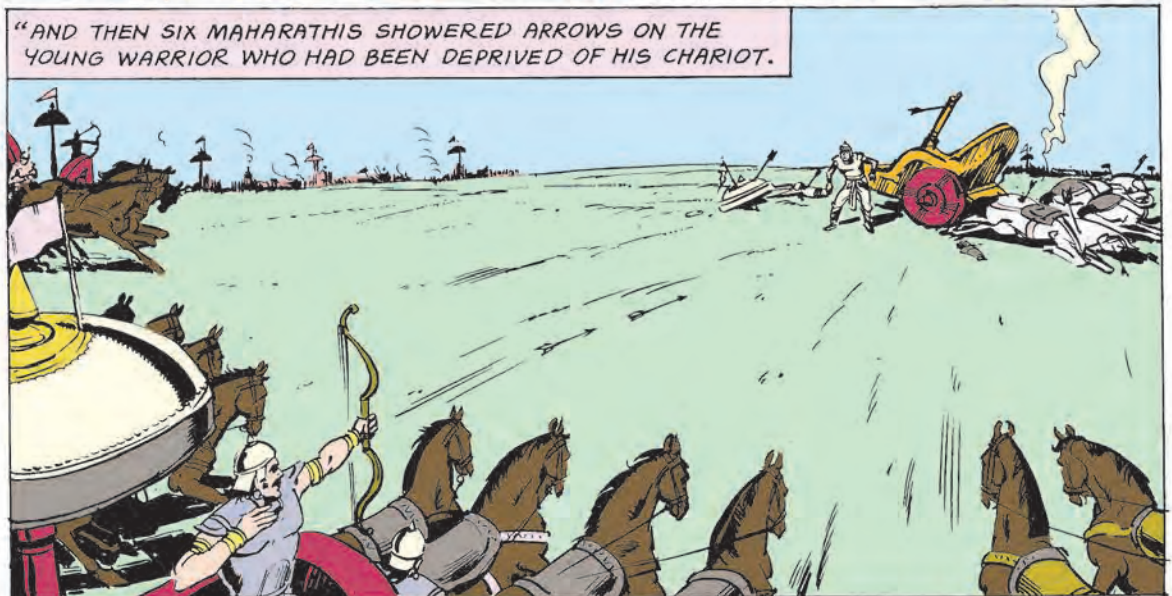
"KRITAVARMA KILLED ABHIMANYU'S HORSES."



"AND KRIPA SHOT DEAD BOTH THE REAR ATTENDANTS OF ABHIMANYU."

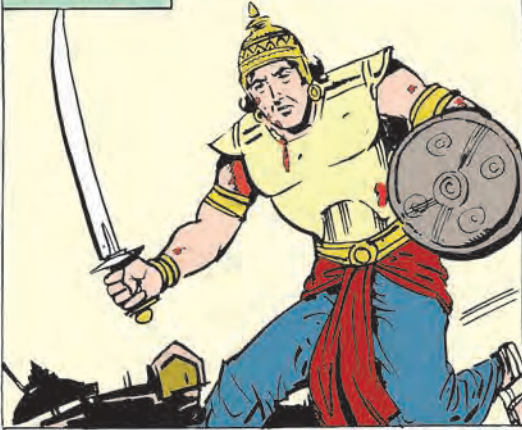


"AND THEN SIX MAHARATHIS SHOWERED ARROWS ON THE YOUNG WARRIOR WHO HAD BEEN DEPRIVED OF HIS CHARIOT."





"UNDAUNTED, ABHIMANYU PICKED UP A SWORD AND SHIELD AND JUMPED INTO THE FRAY."



"DRONA CUT THE SWORD AT THE HILT WITH SHARP ARROWS."



"ABHIMANYU'S SHIELD WAS SHATTERED BY KARNA."



"THE YOUNG WARRIOR THEN PICKED UP A WHEEL OF HIS CART AND RUSHED AT DRONA."



"BUT THE KAURAVA WARRIORS BROKE THE WHEEL INTO PIECES."





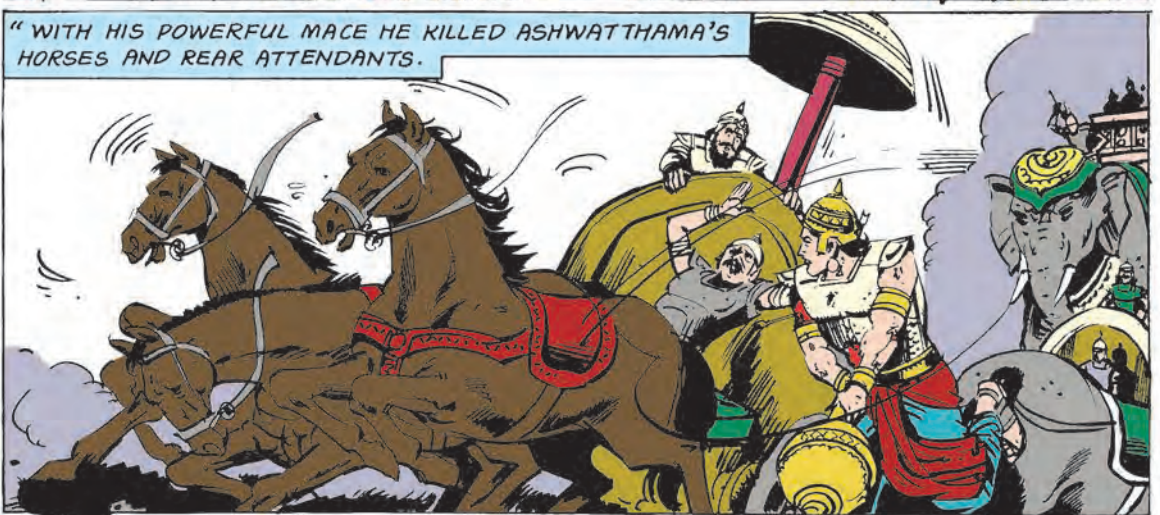
"TAKING UP A MACE, ABHIMANYU RUSHED AT ASHWATTHAMA."



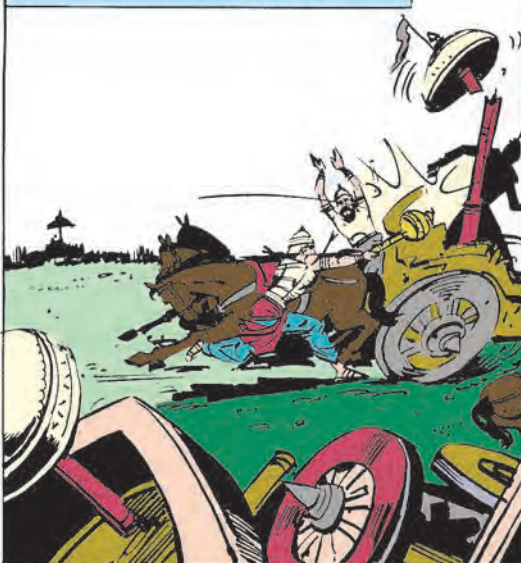
"ASHWATTHAMA RECOILED UNDER THE THREAT."



"WITH HIS POWERFUL MACE HE KILLED ASHWATTHAMA'S HORSES AND REAR ATTENDANTS."



"HE DEMOLISHED CHARIOTS..."

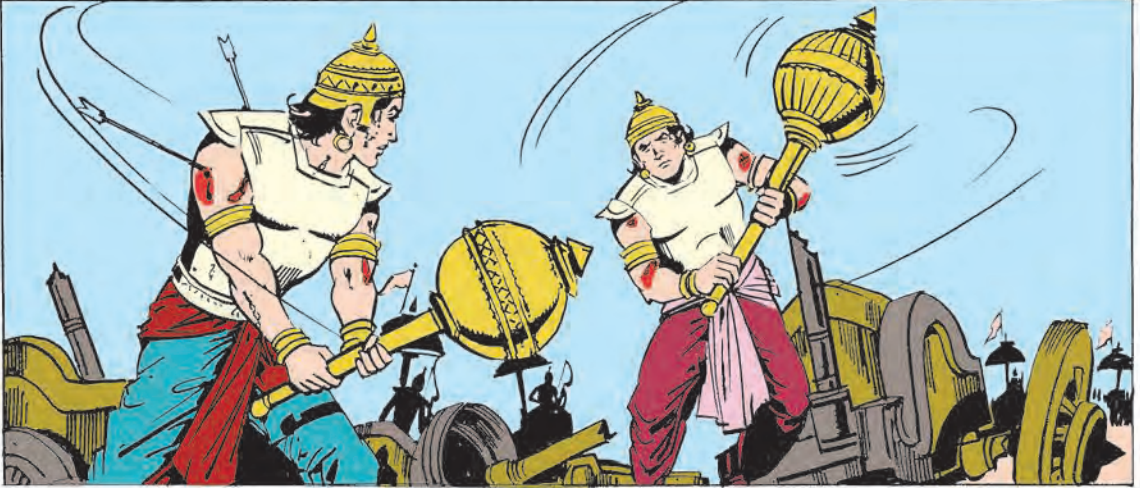


"...AND KILLED ELEPHANTS."





"HIS CHARIOT DESTROYED BY ABHIMANYU, DUHSHASANA'S SON ALSO TOOK UP A MACE."



"HURT BY EACH OTHER'S BLOWS, BOTH COLLAPSED SIMULTANEOUSLY TO THE GROUND."



"THE SON OF DUHSHASANA WAS THE FIRST TO RECOVER."



"HE GOT UP AND STRUCK A HEAVY BLOW ON ABHIMANYU'S FOREHEAD..."



"...ABHIMANYU FELL NEVER TO RISE AGAIN."





"THE SOLDIERS OF THE PANDAVA ARMY WERE TERRIFIED TO HEAR THE NEWS. THEY BEGAN TO FLEE THE BATTLEFIELD."



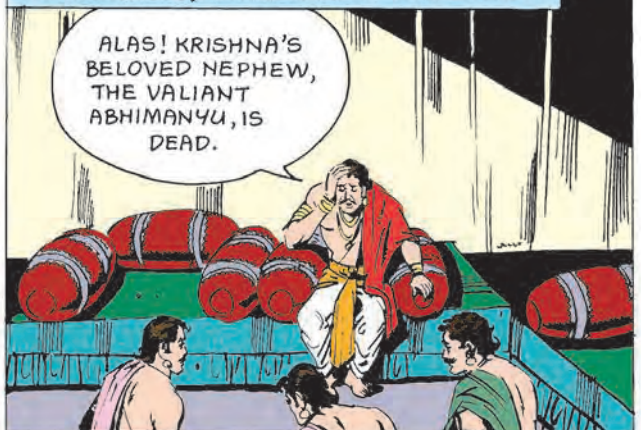
"YUDHISHTHIRA TRIED TO STOP HIS MEN FROM RUNNING AWAY."



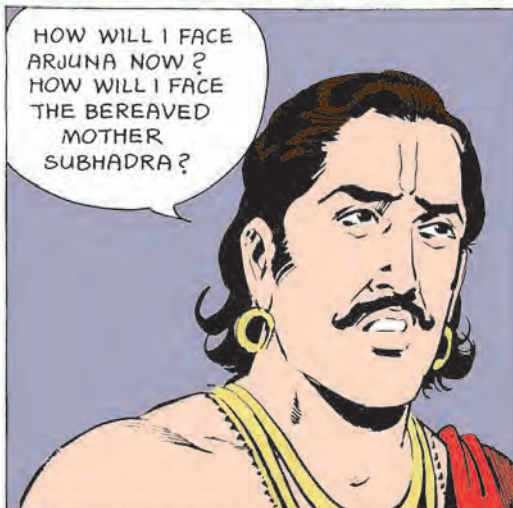
"BUT THE DEMORALISED PANDAVA ARMY RETURNED TO THE CAMP IN DEEP SORROW."



"INCONSOLABLE, YUDHISHTHIRA LAMENTED."



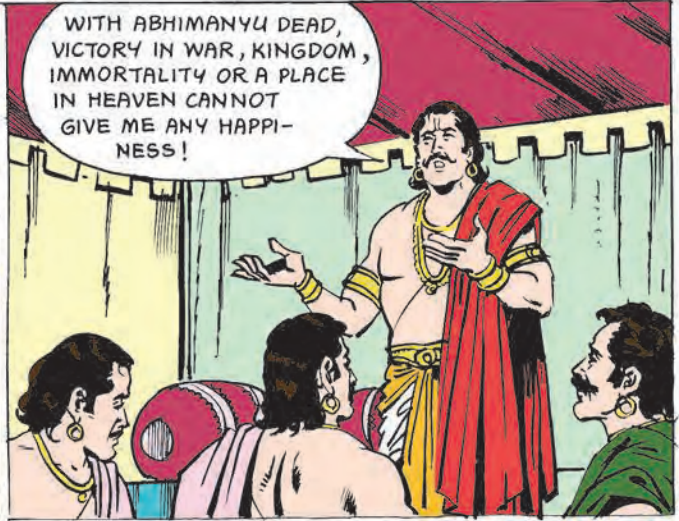
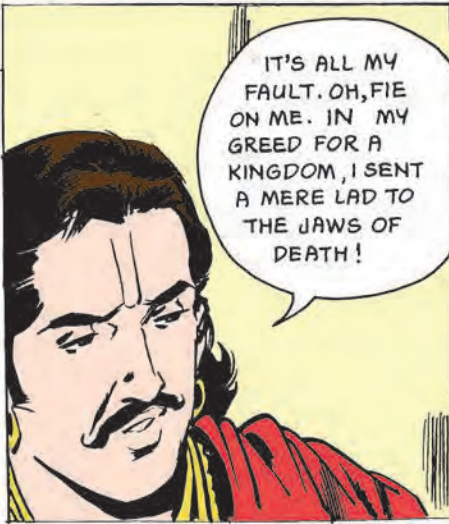
HOW WILL I FACE ARJUNA NOW?  
HOW WILL I FACE THE BEREAVED MOTHER SUBHADRA?



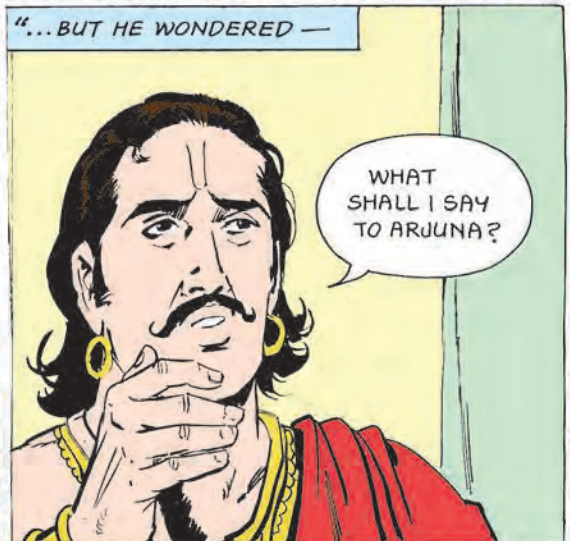
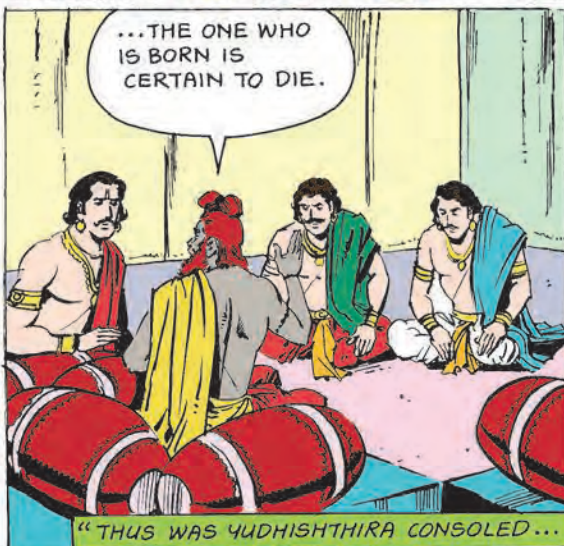
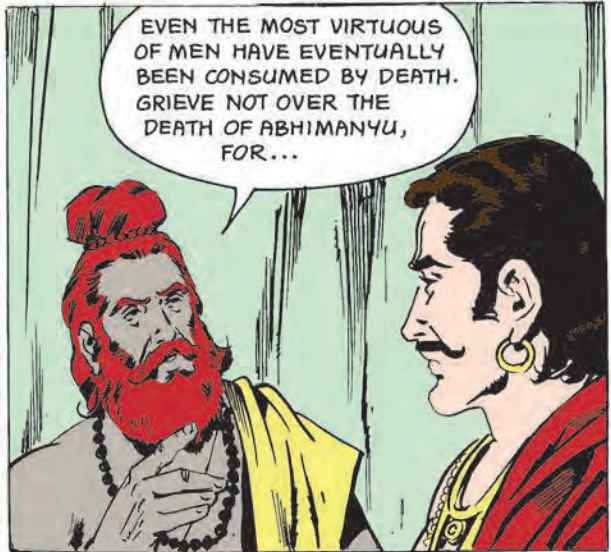
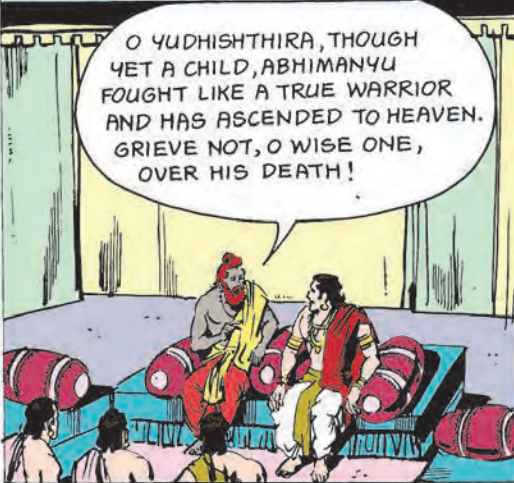
HOW WILL WE RELATE THIS TRAGEDY TO KRISHNA AND ARJUNA?







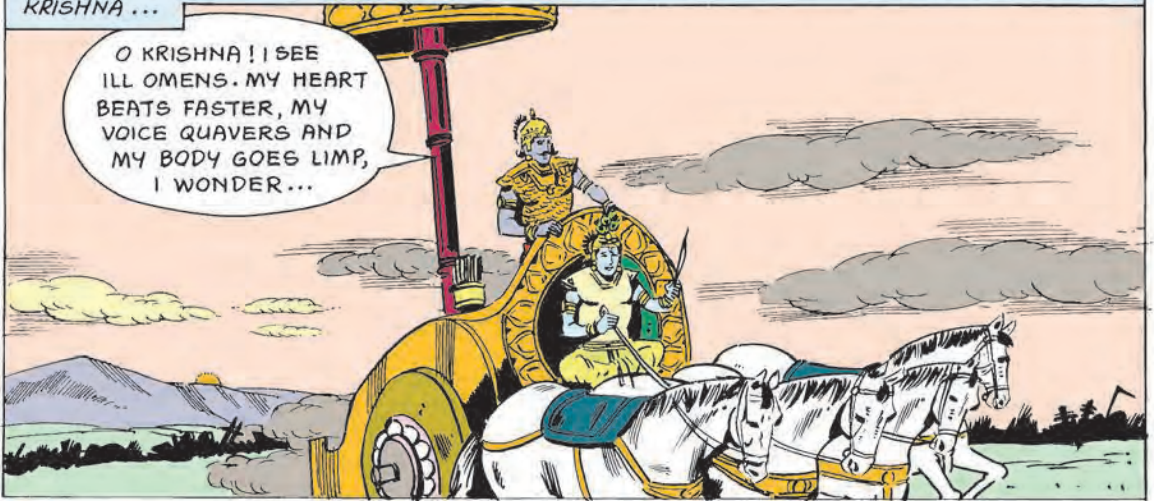
"THE SAGE VYASA APPEARED BEFORE YUDHISHTHIRA AND CONSOLED HIM —



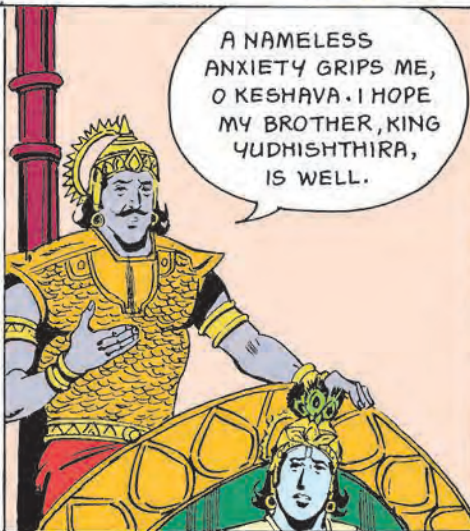


"MEANWHILE, ARJUNA ON HIS WAY BACK FROM HIS WAR WITH THE SAMSHAPTAKAS SAID TO KRISHNA ...

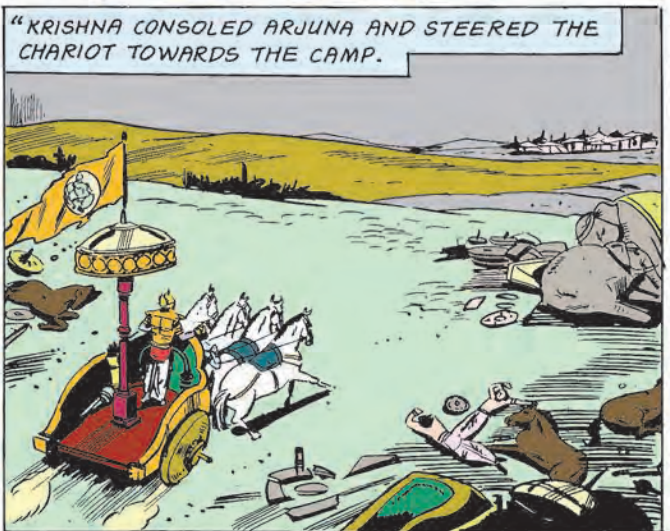
O KRISHNA ! I SEE  
ILL OMENS. MY HEART  
BEATS FASTER, MY  
VOICE QUAVERS AND  
MY BODY GOES LIMP,  
I WONDER...



A NAMELESS  
ANXIETY GRIPS ME,  
O KESHAVA. I HOPE  
MY BROTHER, KING  
YUDHISHTHIRA,  
IS WELL.

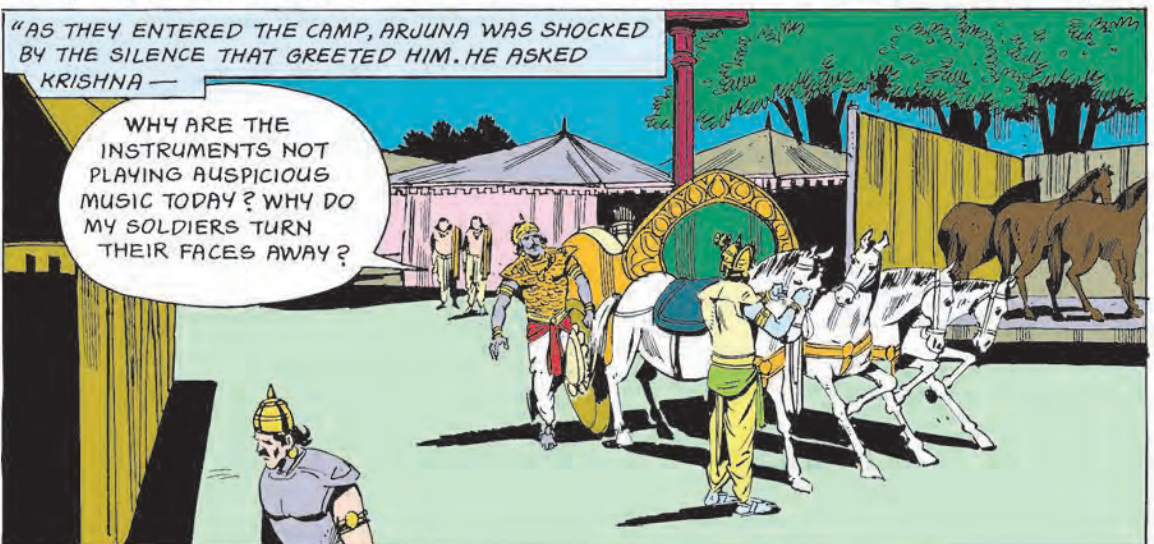


"KRISHNA CONSOLED ARJUNA AND STEERED THE  
CHARIOT TOWARDS THE CAMP.

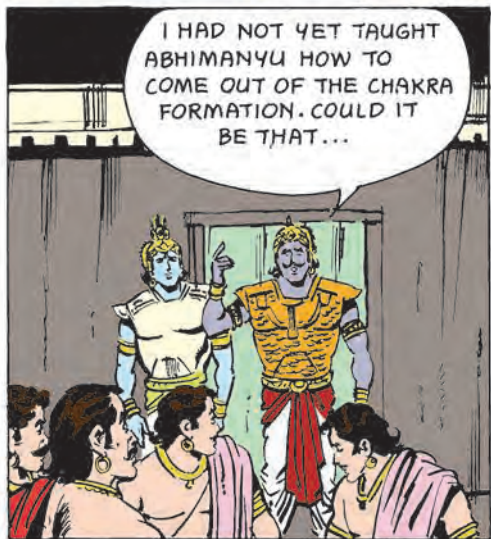
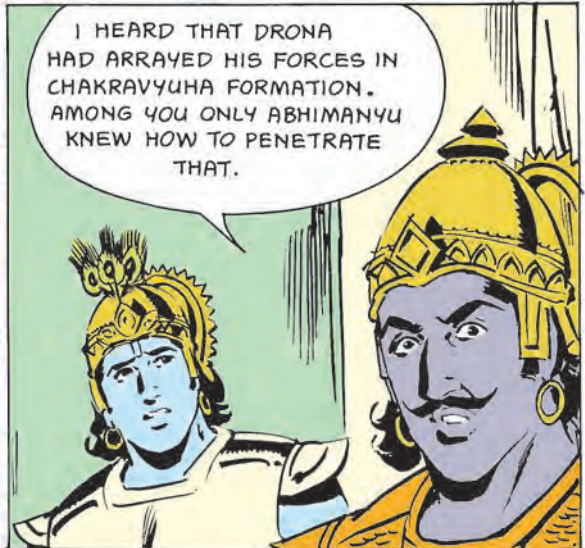
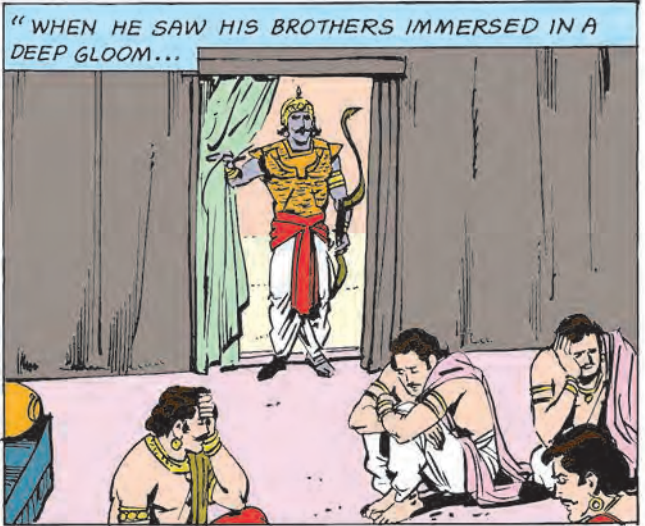
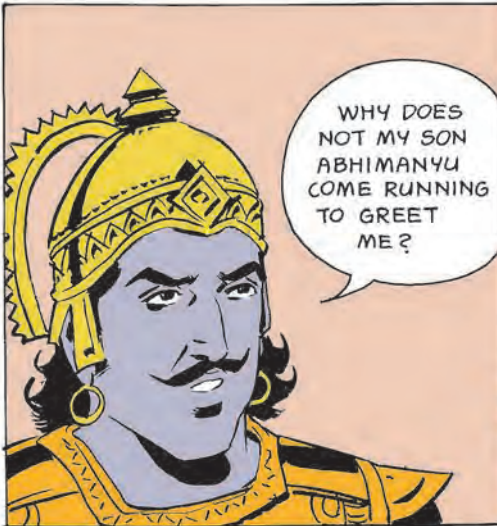


"AS THEY ENTERED THE CAMP, ARJUNA WAS SHOCKED  
BY THE SILENCE THAT GREETED HIM. HE ASKED  
KRISHNA —

WHY ARE THE  
INSTRUMENTS NOT  
PLAYING AUSPICIOUS  
MUSIC TODAY ? WHY DO  
MY SOLDIERS TURN  
THEIR FACES AWAY ?

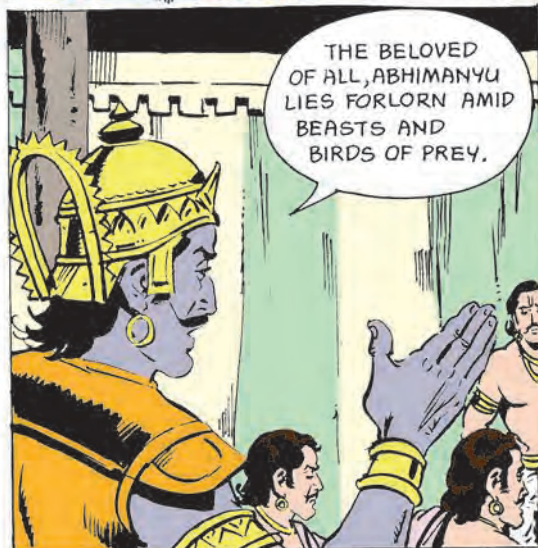
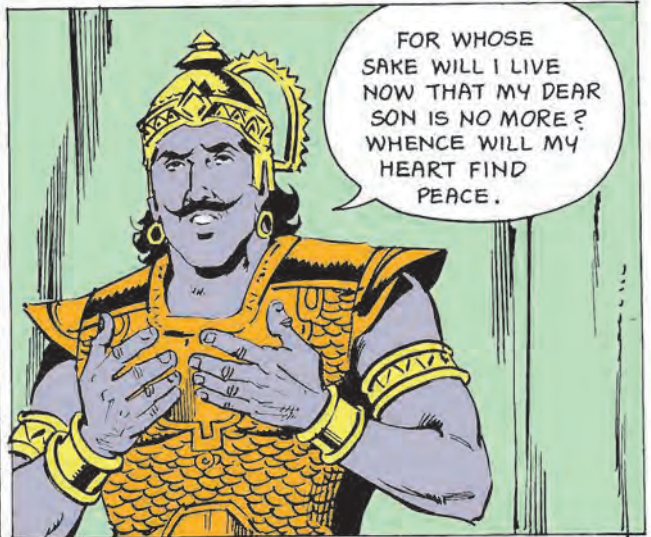
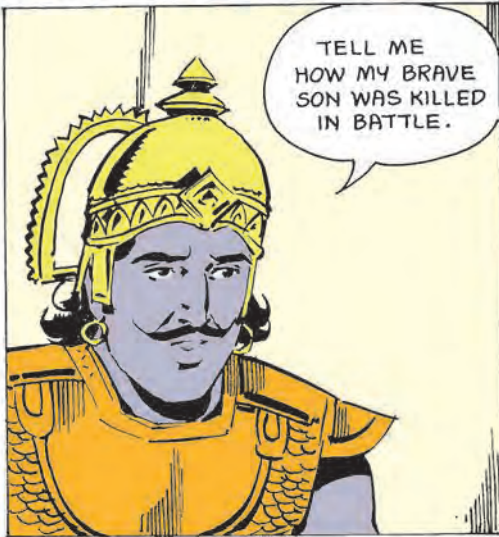






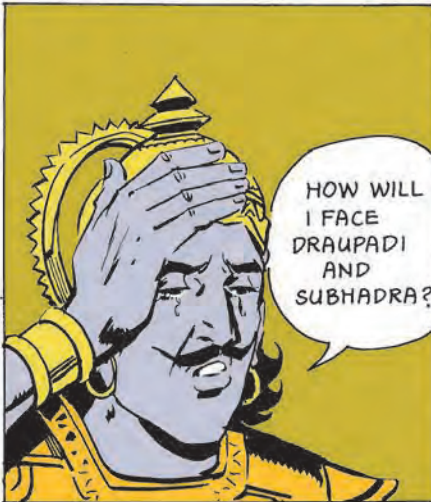


"HIS WORDS MET WITH SILENCE ALL AROUND."





"TURNING TO YUDHISHTHIRA HE SAID —



"SEEING ARJUNA IN UTTER SORROW, KRISHNA CONSOLED HIM.





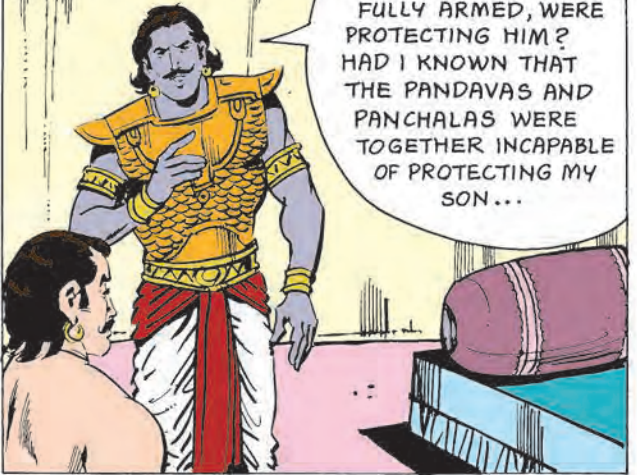
"ARJUNA LOOKED UP AT HIS BROTHERS AND SAID —

TELL ME HOW EXACTLY ABHIMANYU WAS KILLED. TOMORROW I WILL BE THE DEATH OF ALL THOSE WHO KILLED HIM.



"AND THEN HE ASKED —

HOW COULD ABHIMANYU BE KILLED WHEN ALL OF YOU, FULLY ARMED, WERE PROTECTING HIM? HAD I KNOWN THAT THE PANDAVAS AND PANCHALAS WERE TOGETHER INCAPABLE OF PROTECTING MY SON...



...I WOULD MYSELF HAVE LOOKED AFTER HIM.



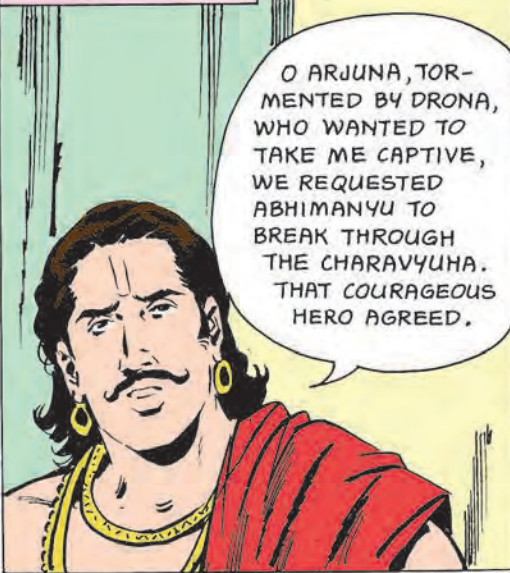
I SHOULD BLAME MYSELF FOR LEAVING HIM WITH COWARDS LIKE YOU. WHO COULD NOT DEFEND A MERE LAD AND WHO CAN ONLY TALK BIG.

"NO ONE WAS ABLE TO FACE THE AGONIZED ARJUNA OR TO SPEAK A WORD TO HIM..."





"...FINALLY YUDHISHTHIRA WHOSE HEART BRIMMED WITH LOVE AND RESPECT FOR ARJUNA, SPOKE —



"AND YUDHISHTHIRA NARRATED HOW JAYADRATHA, WITH THE ASSURANCE OF THE BOON GIVEN BY SHIVA, RESTRAINED THE PANDAVAS FROM GOING TO THE HELP OF ABHIMANYU.



AND THE SIX MAHA-RATHIS PUT ABHIMANYU TO DEATH. SINCE THEN, O ARJUNA, WE HAVE BEEN STRICKEN BY GRIEF.

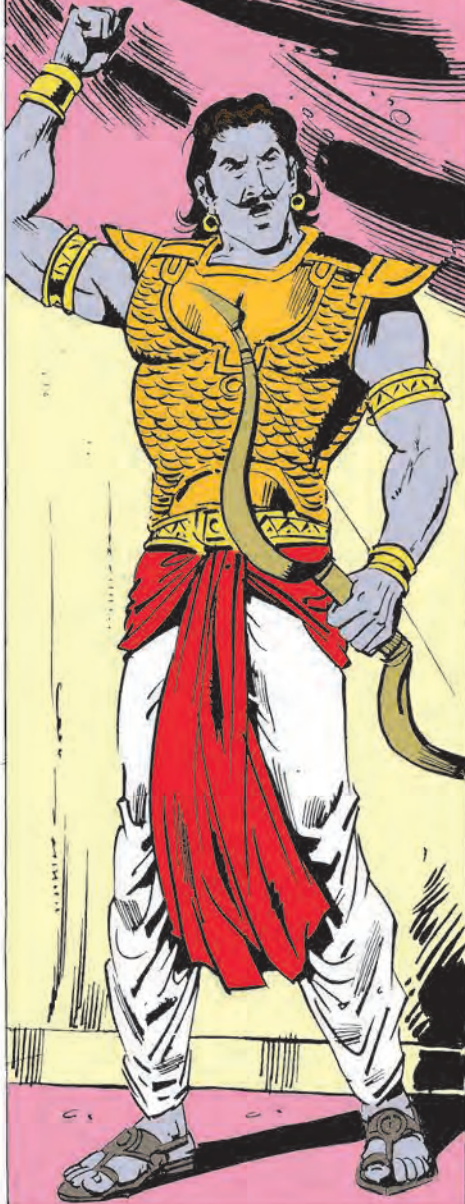
AH MY SON!





"SOON HE RECOVERED. TREMBLING IN INDIGNATION, HE ANNOUNCED.

I WILL KILL JAYADRATHA TOMORROW.

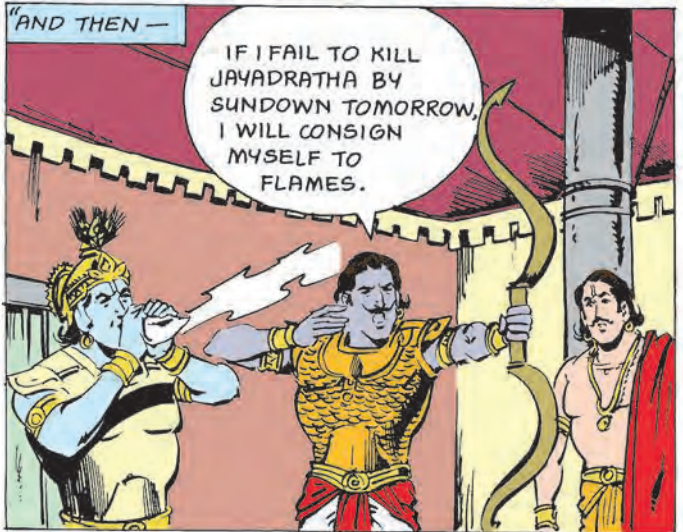


ANYONE WHO DARES TO PROTECT JAYADRATHA SHALL DIE AT MY HANDS.

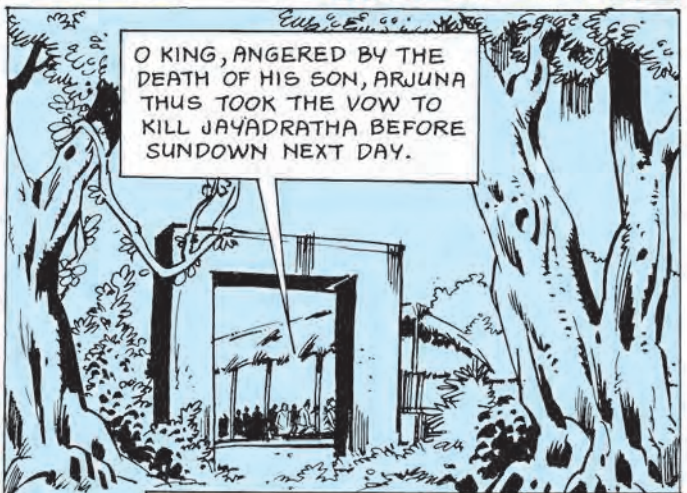


"AND THEN —

IF I FAIL TO KILL JAYADRATHA BY SUNDOWN TOMORROW, I WILL CONSIGN MYSELF TO FLAMES.



O KING, ANGERED BY THE DEATH OF HIS SON, ARJUNA THUS TOOK THE VOW TO KILL JAYADRATHA BEFORE SUNDOWN NEXT DAY.



"THUS ENDS THE THIRTY-FOUR SESSION OF OUR RENDERING OF VYASA'S IMMORTAL ITIHASA MAHABHARATA.